

with negative physical and psychosocial consequences have emerged.

OBJECTIVE: The researchers' goal was to study Internet use and abuse by Greek adolescents and to identify the psychological profile and lifestyle of users. Intervention attempts will also be designed and discussed.

METHODS: An Athens adolescent population representative sample of 315 (164 boys, 151 girls) high school students (mean age: 15 years) were included in the study. For Internet-addiction diagnosis, an international tool (Young's Internet Addiction Test questionnaire) was used. The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire was applied to screen for emotional and behavioral problems. Physical activity and physical fitness were also assessed with appropriate questions. Correlation and χ^2 statistics were performed by using SPSS (SPSS Inc, Chicago, IL).

RESULTS: According to the results, 167 (53.4%) of 315 adolescents were using the Internet for >1 year, 82 (26%) of 315 reported daily use, and 25 (8%) of 315 reported >20 hours' use weekly. Boys were spending significantly more time using the Internet than girls ($P < .05$). According to Young's Questionnaire scoring, no youngster in our sample was addicted. However, in 28 (9.4%) of 315 adolescents, Young's Questionnaire scoring was suggestive of occasional or frequent problems of Internet overuse. The most frequent reason for using the Internet was games ($P < .05$), and 18 (5.8%) of 315 children in our sample were cyberbullying victims. There was a positive correlation of Internet use and hyperactivity according to the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire results ($P < .05$). Positive correlations were also noted for Internet use and delinquency ($P < .001$) as well as dysfunctional peer relationships ($P < .001$).

CONCLUSIONS: Use of the Internet is popular among Greek youth, and it can be related to psychosocial problems if overused.

SIESTA AND SLEEP HABITS OF ADOLESCENTS IN GREECE

Submitted by Emmanouil Paraskakis

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INTRODUCTION: The study of adolescents' sleep habits is of increasing scientific interest because of the variability of sleep patterns and the frequency of sleep disorders in those of this age group.

OBJECTIVE: The aim of our study was to investigate the sleep habits of adolescents living in Greece.

METHODS: We analyzed responses given to preconstructed questionnaires on sleep habits and disturbances from 1331 high school students (mean age: 15 years [range: 14–18 years]). The students were attending high schools of rural, semiurban, and urban areas of Thrace, Ipirus, and Crete (all in Greece).

RESULTS: The median nocturnal and total sleep duration was 7.75 hours (range: 2.5–12.3 hours) and 8.5 hours (range: 2.5–14.0 hours), respectively, and the average bedtime was 11:30 PM. Male students, older adolescents, and residents of towns were going to bed later than female students, younger adolescents, and residents of villages ($P = .039$, $.0003$, and $.056$, respectively). Siesta on a regular basis was reported by 43% and on an occasional basis by 46% of the students. Siesta median duration was 2 hours (range: 0.5–4.5 hours). Daytime sleepiness, difficulties in morning awakening, difficulties in falling asleep, and night awakenings were reported by 15.6%, 14%, 17.2%, and 8.11%, respectively. Students who practiced siesta reported less daytime sleepiness ($P < .0001$). Significant differences were observed between boys and girls regarding sleep disturbances.

CONCLUSIONS: Adolescents in provincial Greece present quite a different sleep pattern compared with their northern European peers, characterized by a late bedtime and midday siesta. Similar to their peers in other countries, considerable rates of sleep disturbances were reported.

PREVALENCE OF SEXUAL ABUSE AMONG ADOLESCENT MEDICAL AND NURSING STUDENTS IN A COLLEGE IN PUNJAB, INDIA

Submitted by Praveen Sobti

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OBJECTIVE: We sought to determine the prevalence of sexual abuse among adolescent medical and nursing students who were attending a college in Punjab, India.

METHODS: Five hundred thirty-two subjects (150 male medical students, 220 female medical students, and 162 female nursing students) between 17 and 26 years old filled out a detailed questionnaire, in absolute privacy, to gather demographic and sexual abuse information.

RESULTS: of the participating students, 28.2% were male and 71.8% were female. The overall prevalence rate of any form of sexual abuse was 32.1% (171 subjects). A severe form of sexual abuse (intercourse) was reported by 30 subjects (10 among males and 20 among females). The most common type of abuse reported was

in the form of showing pornographic material among male students (41 subjects [23%]) and touching of breasts (58 subjects [33.9%]) among females. The minimum age of victims at the time of the first incident was >16 years in 83 subjects (48.5%). The abuser was a friend in 32.1% (29 in males and 27 in females) of the cases. The perpetrators of sexual abuse were males for 132 subjects of both genders. In 56% (96 subjects), the time of abuse was between 2 and 10 PM. Forty-one subjects (23%) currently experience abuse memories in the form of unwanted scenes flashing in dreams, difficulty in maintaining relationships, feeling of guilt, fear, or nausea when touched, and disturbing sexual thoughts, alone or in combination.

CONCLUSIONS: These results provide baseline information on the prevalence and type of sexual abuse among adolescents. Abuse involved both genders, but the perpetrators were male. For nearly one fourth of the students the incident seems to have left a long-term psychological impact on the victim.

Allergology

CORRELATION BETWEEN ALLERGIC RHINITIS, ASTHMA, AND ATOPIC DERMATITIS IN CHILDREN

Submitted by Milica Šofranac

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INTRODUCTION: Allergic rhinitis, asthma, and atopic dermatitis are atopic diseases with the same pathogenic base with regard to the allergic reaction and the type of oversensitivity (facilitated by immunoglobulin E antibodies) with the release of numerous mediators causing allergic inflammation. The incidence of these diseases is increasing constantly. One precedes the others, or they often appear combined.

OBJECTIVE: The goal of this research was to establish the correlation between allergic rhinitis, asthma, and atopic dermatitis in children treated at our health center.

METHODS: In preparation for the research, 3638 medical charts of children aged 3 to 18 years were studied.

RESULTS: Processed were the cases of 142 children with allergic rhinitis (105 boys [73.9%] and 37 girls [26.1%]) who were diagnosed to have allergic rhinitis, asthma, or atopic dermatitis over the previous 4 years. The diagnosis was made on the basis of anamnesis, clinical record, skin-prick test, and consultation with the otolaryngologist. Of all the patients, 25 (17.6%) boys and 18 (12.6%) girls had atopic dermatitis, and 105 (73.9%) boys and 36 (25.3%) girls had asthma. The total number of children with atopic dermatitis was 43 (30.3%), and there were 141 (99.3%) with asthma.

CONCLUSIONS: In 30.3% of the cases, the children with allergic rhinitis also had atopic dermatitis; in 99.3% of the cases, the children with allergic rhinitis also had asthma. The degree of correlation between allergic rhinitis and asthma was higher than that between allergic rhinitis and atopic dermatitis. The boys suffered more often from allergic rhinitis, and its correlation with asthma was greater than that in girls, with whom it was combined with atopic dermatitis to a larger degree.

CYTOKINE PROFILE IN LONG-TERM USE OF INHALED CORTICOSTEROID IN ASTHMATIC CHILDREN RECEIVING SPECIFIC IMMUNOTHERAPY

Submitted by Ariyanto Harsono

Ariyanto Harsono

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INTRODUCTION: Inhaled corticosteroids are widely used for the management of persistent asthma, including by those who receive specific immunotherapy.

OBJECTIVE: Our goal was to elucidate the cytokine profile in long-term use of corticosteroid inhalation in asthmatic children who were receiving specific immunotherapy.

METHODS: We performed a randomized, paralleled, comparative study of asthmatic children allocated into 3 groups: those in group A received inhaled budesonide, those in group B received specific immunotherapy, and those in group C received both specific immunotherapy and inhaled budesonide. The primary outcomes were interleukin 4 (IL-4), IL-5, interferon γ (IFN- γ), and IL-2 levels and forced expiratory volume in 1 second (FEV₁) reversibility.

RESULTS: Significant differences were observed before and after treatment in all groups ($P < .05$). Patients who received inhaled budesonide showed attenuation of IL-4, IL-5, IFN- γ , and IL-2 and 29% failure of FEV₁ reversibility. Patients who received immunotherapy showed attenuation of IL-4 and IL-5, elevation of IFN- γ and IL-2, and 24% failure of improvement of FEV₁ reversibility. Patients who received inhaled corticosteroids and immunotherapy showed attenuation of IL-4 and IL-5, elevation of IFN- γ and IL-2, and 100% improvement of FEV₁ reversibility. Analysis of the discriminator yielded IL-2 as the primary discriminator, which correlated with the decrease of IL-5.

CONCLUSIONS: Long-term use of inhaled corticosteroids by children with asthma who received immunotherapy resulted in elevation of IFN- γ and IL-2 and a decrease of IL-4 and IL-5. Addition of inhaled corticosteroids to immunotherapy resulted in marked attenuation of IL-5 and correlated with greater elevation of IL-2.

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DOI: 10.1542/peds.2007-2022F

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