

Stosowanie wybranych leków przez 15-letnich uczniów szkół warszawskich

Medication use among 15-years old students of Warsaw schools

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Abstract – Introduction. The aim of the study 0 was to assess the prevalence of medicine use for headache, stomach ache, difficulties in getting sleep, nervousness, depression and lack of energy, and also to collect youth’ opinion about problems related to medications use without prescriptions.

Methods. The quantitative and qualitative methods were used: self-administered questionnaire (N = 722) and individual interviews (N = 20). An anonymous questionnaire was distributed to 15-years old students in a random sample of middle schools from three Warsaw districts: Mokotów, Ursynów and Wilanów. Individual interviews were conducted with 15-year-olds from two Warsaw middle schools.

Results. A large proportion of students (81%) reported medicines use at least 1–2 times during last year, while 65% – during last month. The most common were over-the-counter pain relievers, mainly based on paracetamol and ibuprofen. A substantial rate of students (9–12.5%) used also herbal specifics against difficulties in getting sleep, nervousness and depression. A higher proportion of girls used pain relievers and medications for nervousness than boys did. Also more girls were frequent medicine users – especially of pain relievers.

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About 40% of students got pain relievers from parents, 30% reported self-medication practices. Data from the individual interviews indicated that students were aware of possible harm related to nonprescription medication use, but their knowledge was not based on reliable sources.

The results indicate that the issues related to medicine use should be a part of school health education.

Key words: youth, nonprescription medication use, qualitative and quantitative data