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EARLY DETECTION OF ASTHMA AND CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE IN PRIMARY CARE PATIENTS

RANO OTKRIVANJE ASTME I HRONIČNE OPSTRUKTIVNE BOLESTI PLUĆA KOD PACIJENATA U PRIMARNOJ ZDRAVSTVENOJ ZAŠTITI

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Summary

Introduction. Asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease are often unrecognized and undertreated. The aim of this study was to describe the frequency of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and asthma in primary care patients in Serbia, and to examine the agreement between general practitioners and pulmonologists on the diagnosis of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and asthma. **Material and Methods.** In this multicenter observational study, the general practitioners identified eligible patients from October 2009 to June 2010. The study included all adult patients with respiratory symptoms and/or smoking history based on structured interview. The patients were referred to a pulmonologist and underwent a diagnostic work-up, including spirometry. **Results.** There were 2074 patients, 38.4% men, their mean age being 54±15.5 years. The patients were mostly current (40.3%) or ex-smokers (27.4%). The common symptoms included shortness of breath (84.9%), cough (79.1%) and wheezing (64.3%). The diagnosis of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease was confirmed by pulmonologists in 454 (21.9%) and asthma in 455 (21.9%) patients. The chronic obstructive pulmonary disease was newly diagnosed in 226 (10.9%) and asthma in 269 (13%) of the cases. There was a moderate agreement between the pulmonologists and general practitioners on the diagnosis of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (kappa 0.41, 95%CI 0.36-0.46) and asthma (kappa 0.42, 95% CI 0.37-0.465). **Conclusion.** A significant number of patients seen in the general practitioner's office were diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or asthma and half of them represent new cases. A substantial proportion of patients referred to a pulmonologist by primary care physicians have been misdiagnosed.

Key words: Asthma; Pulmonary Disease, Chronic Obstructive; Primary Health Care; Diagnosis; Signs and Symptoms; Adult; Middle Aged; Smoking; Spirometry

Introduction

Asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease are the most common chronic diseases of

Sažetak

Uvod. Astma i hronična opstruktivna bolest pluća često su neprepoznate i neadekvatno lečene. Cilj ove studije je da se sagleda učestalost astme i hronične opstruktivne bolesti pluća kod pacijenata u primarnoj zdravstvenoj zaštiti i utvrdi stepen slaganja dijagnoza između lekara opšte prakse i pulmologa. **Materijal i metode.** U ovoj multicentričnoj, opservacionoj studiji, lekari opšte prakse odabrali su pacijente u periodu između oktobra 2009. i juna 2010. godine. Studija je uključivala odrasle pacijente sa respiratornim simptomima i/ili pušače koji su odabrani na osnovu posebno dizajniranog upitnika. Pacijenti su zatim upućeni na specijalistički pulmološki pregled, koji je uključivao spirometriju. **Rezultati.** Studija je obuhvatila 2 074 pacijenata, prosečne starosti 54±15,5 godina. Među pacijentima najviše je bilo aktuelnih (40,3%) i bivših pušača (27,4%). Najčešći simptomi bili su osećaj nedostatka daha (84,9%), kašalj (79,1%) i sviranje u grudima (64,3%). Dijagnozu hronične opstruktivne bolesti pluća potvrdio je pulmolog kod 454 (21,9%), a astme kod 455 (21,9%) pacijenata. Hronična opstruktivna bolest pluća je prvi put dijagnostikovana kod 226 (10,9%), a astma kod 269 (13%) ispitanika. Registrovano je umereno slaganje u dijagnozi HOBP (kappa 0,41, 95% CI 0,36-0,46) i astme (kappa 0,42, 95% CI 0,37-0,465) između lekara opšte prakse i lekara pulmologa. **Zaključak.** Rezultati studije ukazuju na značajnu učestalost hronične opstruktivne bolesti pluća i astme u primarnoj zdravstvenoj zaštiti, od čega su polovina novodijagnostikovani slučajevi. Postoji značajna razlika u dijagnozi astme i hronične opstruktivne bolesti pluća između lekara opšte prakse i lekara specijalista.

Glavne reči: Astma; Hronična opstruktivna bolest pluća; Primarna zdravstvena zaštita; Dijagnoza; Znaci i simptomi; Odrasli; Srednje godine; Pušenje; Spirometrija

the respiratory system. Asthma is a global health issue, affecting over 300 million people of all age groups throughout the world, with additional 100 million subjects likely to be affected by this dis-

