

Prevalence of Psoriasis in Croatia

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The prevalence of psoriasis in Croatia was studied by the representative samples method. The total number of investigated persons was 8416. The authors detected 131 psoriatics (prevalence — 1.55%). Key words: Psoriasis; Epidemiology; Prevalence.

The fact that psoriasis is determined by genetic factors is widely accepted. Various prevalences of the disease in different environments and different races can confirm this hypothesis. Since the registration of psoriasis vulgaris cases is not compulsory, the epidemiological analysis of the disease is not fully reliable. The most important study was carried out by Lomholt (1) in the Faroe Islands where he established that 2.8% of the total population had psoriasis vulgaris. The data on the psoriasis frequency in Denmark are 3.2% for males and 2.5% for females (2). Farber & Scott (3) give the data for the Scandinavian countries, where in one district there were 1.4% and in another 2.8% patients. The frequency of psoriasis vulgaris varies from 0.1 to 3.0% in different geographical areas and race groups (3, 4). A similar range of values applies to Northwestern Europe with variations from 1.5 to 2.0% (5). Wilkinson (6) gives an approximate value of 1.0 to 2.0% for Great Britain; Hellgren (7) presents an approximate of 2.0% of the total population, whereas Baker (8) thinks that the frequency is only 0.1%.

Apparently there are differences in the distribution of psoriasis not only with respect to the geographical areas but also considering various racial groups. Nakamura et al. (9) report that the frequency of psoriasis in Japan is rather low, ranging from 0.3 to 0.9% of the population, whereas the Henan group (10) refer to a frequency of 0.36% of the population for one Chinese region. Psoriasis vulgaris is relatively rare among the Negroes of North Africa and in North American and South American Indians, while it is more frequently found in East African Negroes (3). So far in Yugoslavia, this kind of study has only been carried out by Arzenšek et al. (11) who investigated the region of Celje in Slovenia in 1984. There they found the prevalence of psoriasis to be 1.18%.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

During 1987, a systematic dermatological investigation was carried out in Croatia (Zagreb and Osijek area). The prevalence of psoriasis was studied by the representative samples method. In Osijek, 5060 persons older than 18 years were investigated: one urban community, one rural community as well as employees in two factories. In Zagreb, 1651 persons older than 18 years were also investigated: one urban community as well as employees in one factory. Five groups of workers and employees from different business companies numbering together 1705 persons were additionally studied (Table I, II, III). The total number of investigated persons was 8416.

RESULTS

The authors detected 131 psoriatics (prevalence of psoriasis is 1.55%). In Osijek the male/female ratio was 2.8:1.0, and 1.9:1.0 in Zagreb. During the examination, special attention was found on the anamnestic data on the presence of psoriasis in members of their families. An affirmative answer was obtained in 31 patients, i.e. 23.7%, and a negative answer in 100 patients, i.e. 76.3%.

The results obtained in our study have been compared with the results obtained by other authors based on the systematic study of the given population. The frequency of psoriasis in our study (1.55%) is the same as the frequency from Hellgren (7) and Braun-Falco et al. (5) in Northwestern Europe.

Table I. Prevalence of psoriasis in Croatia (Yugoslavia). A study of 8 416 persons

	No. of investigated	No. of psoriatics	Frequency
Zagreb	1 651	20	1.21
Osijek	5 060	61	1.20
Screening for professional diseases	1 705	50	2.93
Total	8 416	131	1.55

Table II. Frequency of psoriasis in the Zagreb area

	No. of investigated	No. of psoriatics	Frequency
Community			
N. Dimić	1 132	17	1.5
Railway Car			
Repair Shop	519	3	0.52
Total	1 651	20	1.21

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Table III. Number of persons affected with psoriasis detected during screening for professional diseases in Croatia

Business	No. of investigated	No. of psoriatics	Prevalence rate
Plastics products,			
Split	388	4	1.0
Production of			
Aluminium, Šibenik	238	6	2.5
Public transportation, Šibenik	121	4	3.3
Hair dresser,			
Zagreb	258	1	0.4
Railway workers,			
Croatia	700	35	5.0
Total	1705	50	2.93

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