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Current rate of alcohol consumption among hellenic adult population in relation to age, gender and family-background

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Background

Patterns of alcohol use vary, depending on age, gender and socio-demographic characteristics. Taking into consideration the alcohol-related health sequels and social consequences, it is important to gather information about drinking patterns and related risk factors. The aim of the study is to reveal the current rate of alcohol consumption among Hellenic adult population and to associate the drinking patterns with age, gender and family-background.

Materials and methods

This study is part of a large ongoing survey of preventive and screening practices in Greece, which is organized by the PACMeR (PanHellenic Association for Continual Medical Research). For this project, PACMeR physicians employed data derived from trial questionnaires. A sample of 5499 Hellenic individuals (2948 female, 2551 male, and age range 21–97) entered the study and answered the questionnaires during a face-to-face interview. Safety data storing was assured by SESy_Europe Database, a 3-component database dedicated to population-based cross-sectional surveys on prevention and screening activities. Alcohol consumption data were therefore abstracted from the database and analyzed. X2 test, likelihood ratio x2 test and Mantel-Haenszel test were used for statistical analysis.

Results

The proportion of alcohol users is directly correlated to the age group for both genders. Analysis by gender of the proportion of alcohol users, evidenced that consumption is statistically higher among men in comparison with women ($p < 0.0001$). Moreover, daily alcohol assumption is consistently higher in men (28.50 g) than in women (9.85 g). The proportion of people using alcohol by age group is statistically significant for both gender ($p < 0.0001$). When compared with female gender, male population displayed higher rate of alcohol use for any of the age-subgroups analysed. The proportion of ex-alcohol drinkers was lower than 1% for any female age-subgroup. The proportion of men who discontinued alcohol consumption ranged between 3.4% for males <45, to 5.9% for those >75. The family status (single /married /divorced /widows /number of children) don't have statistically significant results in any of the subgroups.

Discussion

Individuals of male gender and of young age seem to be at major risk for alcohol consumption. Since the rate of alcohol consumption was consistently high among younger individuals a key attention should be given to preventive activities among adolescents. Since number of children and family status did not effect alcohol consumption status significantly, solitude is not a major risk factor for alcohol dependence among Hellenic healthy adults.

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