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Title: Level of asthma control among asthmatic children in Thessaloniki area in northern Greece

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Body: Background: In spite of the use of international guidelines for the diagnosis and treatment of asthma, there is continuing evidence of poor asthma control among asthmatic children. Level of asthma control has not been previously evaluated in Greece. Aim: To evaluate the level of asthma control among asthmatic children in the city of Thessaloniki (Northern Greece). Method: Parents of children > 2 years old with doctor's diagnosis of asthma interviewed by the same physician using a detailed questionnaire including asthma symptoms, limitation of activities, need for rescue medication, asthma exacerbations and emergency visits. 365 children were examined either in Asthma Clinic, or the Emergency Department from November 2010 to May 2011. Results: Mean age of the children was 7.8 years. 93/365 (25.48%) of them achieved adequate control of asthma, as defined by GINA (Global Initiative for Asthma), 176/365 (48.22%) had partly controlled asthma, whereas uncontrolled asthma was found in the 96/365 (26.3%) of the children. 104/365 (30%) of the study population had used rescue medication for more than two days during the previous week, whereas 70/365 (19.2%) of them reported limitation of activities and 62/365 (17%) had nocturnal symptoms within the previous month. Conclusions: One out four of the children suffering from asthma in Thessaloniki area achieves control of the disease. An increased use of rescue medication for more than two days was reported in 1/3 children, limitation of activities and nocturnal symptoms in around 1/5 of the children.