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Title: How to enhance social knowledge on respiratory diseases? Polish Spirometry Day 2011 and 2013, World Spirometry Day 2012

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Body: Background There is rather a weak knowledge of the population in Poland about respiratory diseases causes, symptoms and effects. Dissemination of knowledge on these issues was one of the objective of Polish and World Spirometry Day. Material 4088 persons (from 490 different places) were investigated in a study made during Polish Spirometry Day in 2011 and World Spirometry Day in 2012. Pulmonary function tests were completed (Easy One, Spirolab spirometers) and occurrence of respiratory system diseases symptoms, allergies, smoking, etc. were proved. Final analyses encompassed the results of 2881 people. Results For 1860 people it was the first pulmonary function test in their life. 357 cases of obstruction were identified (among smokers 148 (15.1% of this group) and among non-smokers 209 (11.0% of group)). Of those people who have not previously been diagnosed with asthma or COPD (N=2452), spirometry tests showed obstruction among 266 individuals (10.9% of this group). Comparison of spirometric parameters depending on the place of residence have shown (using Kruskal-Wallis test) statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$) between groups. The lowest values of FEV1 and FEV1/FVC ratios are characteristic for residents of small towns and the highest for people living in non-urban areas. Conclusion Polish society still has very little or no knowledge about chronic respiratory diseases and their relationship with smoking. The lack of knowledge about the state of health is substantial and significant proportion of the population may be unknowingly living with respiratory disease. The study shows the importance of screening tests and promotion of appropriate knowledge.