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Title: Activities during the World Asthma Day in 2012: Its utility for detecting underdiagnosis and undertreatment in asthma patients

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Body: Objectives Assess whether the activities performed in La Plata, Argentina, during World Asthma Day (WAD) in 2012 were useful for detecting early disease, underdiagnosis and undertreatment in patients with asthma. Methods Society of Pneumology of La Plata and the Argentine Respiratory Medicine Association organized activities in a tent installed in a square in La Plata, in WAD in 2012. Spirometry was performed before and after bronchodilator test and smoking status, clinical symptoms, previous asthma diagnosis, treatment and medical assistance were surveyed using a questionnaire in people who voluntarily agreed to participate. Results 147 participants were screened (52M; 95F); age 49.3±18.8 years (SD); BMI 25.94.±4 k/m². 43 (29.3%) were current smokers; 42 (28.6%) were ex-smokers. 95 subjects (64.6%) reported respiratory symptoms indicative of asthma; while 38 (25.9%) knew there were asthmatics. In this group 12 (31.6%) were not being treated at the time of the survey and spirometric tests showed airway obstruction (FEV₁/FVC ≤ 0.75) in 19 (50%) subjects suggesting poor asthma control. Albuterol was the drug most frequently used. Individuals who reported no previous diagnosis of asthma, 31 (21.1%) had obstructive spirometry; 22 showed significant bronchodilator test (400 mcg albuterol) and 16 completely normalized airway obstruction, which strongly suggested the diagnosis of asthma. Conclusion WAD activities shown to be useful to detect subjects without previously asthma diagnosis and to demonstrate underdiagnosis and undertreatment of this disease. They also improve society and patients awareness, promote early asthma detection and treatment.