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Title: Epidemiological study of bronchial asthma among preparatory school pupils in Assiut district

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Body: Background: The prevalence of asthma and allergies is increasing in both western and developing countries. Few studies evaluated asthma prevalence in Egypt. Aims: Determination of the prevalence and risk factors of asthma among preparatory school children in Assiut district, in upper Egypt. Subjects and Methods: A cross sectional study was conducted among preparatory school students in Assiut city and two rural areas in Assiut governorate in upper Egypt. Twelve schools were selected randomly from different regions in Assiut city and two rurals areas. The total coverage of the students included was 1048 (482 boys and 566 girls). Data were collected by self administered questionnaire (in Arabic Language) which was fulfilled by the participants. Results: Of the 1048 positively responding subjects, 65 fitted the diagnosis of asthma with over all prevalence of 6.2%. No significant difference was found between urban and rural areas (P: 0.075). A positive family history of allergy and the presence of other allergic disease were significantly associated risk factors for asthma. Exposure to dust, cigarette smoke, playing and physical activity, and common cold attacks were the most common triggering factors for asthma exacerbations followed by other factors such as special foods or drinks. Conclusion: Bronchial asthma is a significant health problem among children and adolescents in Assiut governorate and needs special care services. Wider scale multi-center studies in upper Egypt and other localities of Egypt are needed to outline the profile of bronchial asthma among children and adolescents in the whole country.