

Large gender differences in cardiovascular risk and in willingness to take part in preventive activities call for action - Results of the Polish 400 Cities Project

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Purpose: The main objective of P400CP is to improve detectability and control of cardiovascular risk factors among small-town and rural inhabitants. The purpose of the current analysis is to assess the gender difference in cardiovascular risk profile in the surveyed population.

Methods: In 2003-2004 the P400CP covered 36,696 subjects (age:18-98) in 123 towns (population < 8,000). SBP, DBP, anthropometric measurements, total cholesterol and fasting p-glucose were done in all subjects. For risk assessment of cardiovascular death we used the SCORE algorithm for countries bearing high risk of cvd.

Results: The participation rate was two times lower among men than women (W24,215; M12,481*). 65% of examined subjects had SBP > 140 and/or DBP > 90 mmHg at the first visit (W64.5%, M68%**). Awareness of hypertension was higher in women (44%) than in men (36%*). The prevalence of overweight (BMI = 25-30) or obesity (BMI > 30) was W69%; M76%*. Almost 3/4 of subjects had chol > 190 mg/dl (W72%; M66%*). Out of these W14% and M9%* had a previously detected hypercholesterolemia. The prevalence of previously diagnosed DM was 8% (n.s. gender difference). However, among non-diabetics W14% and M20% had fasting-glu > 100 mg/dl.* W12% and M21.5% admitted to tobacco smoking**. The SCORE analysis was carried out in a subsample of 11,041W and 5,333M (45-64 years age group). In the analysed group almost half of male subjects (44.3%) were carrying high or extremely high risk of cardiovascular death (> 5%). This proportion was over five times higher than the corresponding ratio for females (8.6%; p < 0.001).

Conclusions: Higher prevalence of the major risk factors among men than women confirms the correctness of targeting preventive and therapeutical intervention more to this group. A low rate of participation among men shows requirement of using the modern techniques of social psychology and marketing to improve willingness of cooperation in this group.*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01