Substances Abuse among Medical Students
University of Zagreb

Marjeta Majer, Vera Musil, Vesna Jureša

University of Zagreb, School of Medicine, Andrija Štampar School of Public Health
Introduction

• Experimenting could be a part of psychological development during adolescence
  – university students increased risk of substance abuse

• Recent studies showed high prevalence of smoking and binge drinking among Croatian youth
  – ESPAD 2015:
    • prevalence of smoking: lifetime 62%, daily in last 30 days 23%
    • prevalence of binge drinking 47%
    • prevalence of marijuana use: lifetime 22%

Objective

• The aim of this study was to determine prevalence of consumption tobacco, alcohol and experimenting with psychoactive drugs among first year medical students University of Zagreb
Methods and participants (1)

- Study included:
  - 304 first year medical students (60% female) in academic year 2015/2016

- Data were obtained by anonymous questionnaire “School Health Survey”

- Data were analyzed by descriptive statistics
## School Health Survey

**Q20. Do you smoke?**
1. Yes, every day
2. Sometimes
3. No

**Q21. How old were you, when you smoked for the first time?**
1. I never smoked
2. Less than 10 years
3. 11 years
4. 12 years
5. 13 years
6. 14 years
7. 15 years
8. 16 years
9. 17 years

**Q26. How old were you, when you drank first time out of home?**
1. I never drank more than one gulp
2. Less than 10 years
3. 11-12 years
4. 13-14 years
5. 15-16 years
6. 17-18 years

**Q29. Have you ever drink more than five or more drinks one after another in a couple of hours?**
1. Yes
2. No

**Q30. If answer is “yes” how many time it happened in last 12 months?**
1. Once
2. 2-3 times
3. 4-6 times
4. More than 6 times

**Q37. Have you ever try something else in addition to alcohol and nicotine?**
1. Yes
2. No

**Q38. If “yes” what?**
Results (1)

Do you smoke?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yes, every day</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sometimes</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no answer</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N (M) = 123
N (F) = 181
Results (2)

How old were you, when you smoked for the first time?

- **I never smoked**: 34% (M: 31%)
- **I never smoked**: 31% (F: 34%)
- **17 years**: 18% (M: 12%)
- **16 years**: 17% (M: 14%)
- **15 years**: 13% (M: 11%)
- **14 years**: 13% (M: 11%)
- **13 years**: 7% (M: 4%)
- **12 years**: 5% (M: 3%)
- **less than 10 years**: 3% (M: 1%)
- **no answer**: 2% (M: 1%)

N (M) = 123
N (F) = 181
Results (3)

How old were you, when you drank first time out of home?

- **no answer**: 0 (1%)
- **17-18 years**: 11% (F), 12% (M)
- **15-16 years**: 29% (F), 35% (M)
- **13-14 years**: 39% (F), 50% (M)
- **11-12 years**: 2% (F), 7% (M)
- **Less than 10 years**: 1% (F), 5% (M)
- **I never drank more than one gulp**: 7% (F), 2% (M)

N (M) = 123
N (F) = 181
Results (4)

Have you ever drink more than five or more drinks one after another in a couple of hours?

- **yes**
  - M: 80%
  - F: 67%
  - p = 0.019

- **no**
  - M: 20%
  - F: 33%

N (M) = 123
N (F) = 181
Results (5)

If answer is “yes” how many time it happened in last 12 months?

M  F

Once  18%  20%
2-3 times  22%  31%
4-6 times  18%  12%
More than 6 times  38%  37%
No answer  3%  0%

N (M)= 98
N (F)= 122
Have you ever try something else in addition to alcohol and nicotine?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yes</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no answer</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N (M) = 123  
N (F) = 181
Results (7)

If “yes” what?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>Ž</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heroin</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecstasy</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N (M) = 41
N (F) = 40
Conclusion

• Results showed:
  – low prevalence of daily smoking among medical students,
  – high prevalence of binge drinking, especially in male students
  – every third male and almost every fourth female students tried marijuana

• Possible cause for these finding:
  – despite the laws, smoking and drinking are socially acceptable in Croatia

• These results indicate the need of intervention programs to reduce alcohol abuse and experimentation with illegal drugs among medical students
GOOD HABITS FORMED AT YOUTH MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE.

Aristotle

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