AD-0377 – Role of educational level on the prevalence of diabetes, obesity and hypertension among Bulgarian Roma people

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Roma people comprise about 5% of the whole population in Bulgaria. They are less educated, most of them are unemployed, without health insurance. It is well known that the mean life span of Roma people is at least 5 years shorter compared to the remaining Bulgarian population. Chronic diseases among them are more prevalent but this observation has not been statistically verified. Until now there is a complete lack of confirmed data on the frequency of some chronic diseases among this minority.

The aim of the screening program was to investigate the prevalence of diabetes, hypertension and obesity in relation of educational level among Roma people in Bulgaria.

Material and methods: After receiving informed consent 365 Roma people (88 male, 24% and 277 female, 76%), mean age 43.9 ± 16.1 y (18 to 88 y) were screened. We collected data on educational level, presence of arterial hypertension and diabetes. Actual arterial pressure was measured, BMI was calculated and fasting blood sugar was determined. The data were processed statistically using SPSS 13.0.

Conclusion: Our results demonstrate high prevalence of diabetes, obesity and hypertension among Roma people in Bulgaria, which are associated with lower of educational level, unemployment and lack of access to medical care.

Diabetes - Roma people, less than elementary education

Diabetes - Roma people, elementary education or higher

Results: According to BMI, Roma people were distributed as follows: normal BMI - 30.7%; overweight - 33.2% and obese – 36.2%. Diabetes was found in 11.2% of the Roma people (7.1% known and 4.1% newly diagnosed). Arterial hypertension was found in 43.5% of them. Roma people were divided into two groups considering their educational level and social status. Individuals with less than elementary school fell in group 1. All of them were unemployed. In group 2 are those with elementary or upper education.