

## TOBACCO SMOKING HABITS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

### PALENIE TYTONIU WŚRÓD MŁODZIEŻY SZKÓŁ PONADPODSTAWOWYCH

Gabriel Dziura<sup>1(A,B,C,D,F)</sup>, Małgorzata Tokarska-Rodak<sup>1(A,D,E)</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Health Sciences, John Paul II University in Biała Podlaska, Poland

#### Authors' contribution

Wkład autorów:

- A. Study design/planning  
zaplanowanie badań
- B. Data collection/entry  
zebranie danych
- C. Data analysis/statistics  
dane – analiza i statystyki
- D. Data interpretation  
interpretacja danych
- E. Preparation of manuscript  
przygotowanie artykułu
- F. Literature analysis/search  
wyszukiwanie i analiza literatury
- G. Funds collection  
zebranie funduszy

Tables: 0

Figures: 0

References: 5

Submitted: 2023 Oct 20

Accepted: 2023 Oct 23

#### Dear Editor,

For several years, we have been observing a positive trend of the reduction in the number of young people taking up tobacco smoking. However, the age when people initiate this habit is particularly worrisome. Smoking traditional tobacco products is as harmful as using their equivalents, such as chewing tobacco [1,2]. The issue is noticed on a global scale, according to the information provided by the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as nationwide, as indicated by the Polish Ministry of Health. Smoking is a common problem in Poland. It is estimated that 29% of adults smoke tobacco, of which 34% are men, and 23% are women [3], whereas young people most often initiate smoking within groups of their peers. Smoking leads to a series of health consequences, including acceleration of cell ageing processes, the weakening of immune system functions, which significantly influences the risk of tobacco-related diseases in adult life, increased frequency of lesions related to cardiac muscle ischemia, and to physical and mental addiction to nicotine [4].

In a questionnaire answered by 235 students of secondary schools (from Lublin Province), 6.8% people declared smoking traditional cigarettes, whereas 11.5% stated they smoked electronic cigarettes. Nearly half of the respondents (45.5%) admitted that they attempted smoking. Most people smoked occasionally (11.1%). 5.5% of the students smoked cigarettes on a daily basis, and 1.7% did it several times a week. Young people, most often, did not hide the fact of smoking from their friends (16.2%), but the students tended to hide it more frequently from their parents (13.6%). The frequency of smoking among young people increased along with a deterioration in the family's financial status ( $p=0.015$ ;  $\text{Chi}^2$  10.470; Cramér's  $V$  0.211) and decreased depending on the education level of the parents (mother:  $p=0.001$ ;  $\text{Chi}^2$  15.802; Cramér's  $V$  0.260; father:  $p=0.000$ ;  $\text{Chi}^2$  22.065; Cramér's  $V$  0.309). The frequency of smoking declared by the respondents was significantly

**Keywords:** nicotine, young people, smoking, hygiene, prevention

**Słowa kluczowe:** nikotyna, młodzież, palenie, higiena, profilaktyka

Dziura G, Tokarska-Rodak M. Tobacco smoking habits of secondary school students. Health Prob Civil. 2023; 17(4): 289-290. <https://doi.org/10.5114/hpc.2023.132308>

**Address for correspondence / Adres korespondencyjny:** Małgorzata Tokarska-Rodak, Faculty of Health Sciences, John Paul II University in Biała Podlaska, Sidorska 95/97, 21-500 Biała Podlaska, Poland, e-mail: m.tokarska-rodak@dyd.akademiabialska.pl, phone: +48 83 344 99 00.

ORCID: Małgorzata Tokarska-Rodak <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2297-970X>

Copyright: © John Paul II University in Biała Podlaska, Gabriel Dziura, Małgorzata Tokarska-Rodak. This is an Open Access journal, all articles are distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>), allowing third parties to copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format and to remix, transform, and build upon the material, provided the original work is properly cited and states its license.

higher, when parents also used tobacco products ( $p=0.033$ ;  $\text{Chi}^2$  4.546). A vast majority of the students (79.6%) claimed that smoking is harmful to health, whereas 2.5% of the respondents were convinced that this addiction is harmless. More than 11% of the students were of the opinion that smoking could be harmful to health, but only after many years of continued smoking.

The results of the study indicate that slightly more than 18% of the secondary school students turn to tobacco products, which confirms the downward trend observed in recent years [5]. This proves the effectiveness of actions to promote a healthy lifestyle, but it does not mean that continued health education is no longer necessary. It is also vital to remember the role of the impact of the family environment on the formation of health behaviors of children and adolescents. The increase in the social disapproval of cigarette smoking and use of their equivalents in the public space is also a result of widespread social campaigns and actions to prevent cardiovascular diseases and tumors, which are currently the main causes for premature deaths.

### References:

1. Surma S, Szyndler A, Narkiewicz K. [Awareness of selected risk factors for cardiovascular disease in the young population]. *Choroby Serca i Naczyń*. 2017; 14(4): 186-193 (in Polish).
2. Binkowska-Bury M, Sałacińska I, Więch P, Januszewicz P. [Tobacco smoking among first year students of Rzeszow universities]. *Med Og Nauk Zdr*. 2015; 21(1): 101-106 (in Polish). <https://doi.org/10.5604/20834543.1142368>
3. Linowski B. [Tobacco smoke. The most important modern oncological threat]. *Kurier Medyczny Menadżera Zdrowia*. 2019; 2: 23 (in Polish).
4. Opielak G, Nadulska A, Piotrkowicz J, Szeszko Ł. [Cigarettes smoking among young people in schools, due to actual research]. *Forum Medycyny Rodzinnej*. 2014; 8(4): 190-194 (in Polish).
5. Małkowska-Szkutnik A, Mazur J. [The styles of coping in stressful situations and the strain of psychological complaints in relation to tobacco smoking in senior secondary school adolescents]. *Przegląd Lekarski*. 2012; 69(10): 872-877 (in Polish).