

POSSIBILITIES AND LIMITS OF THE POPULATION SCREENING USING QUESTIONNAIRES IN EARLY DETECTION OF SKIN CANCERS

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ABSTRACT

The incidence of skin cancers, especially of malignant melanoma is increasing worldwide. Prerequisite for successful treatment is an early detection, and population screening using questionnaires is a possible contribution to the solution of this problem.

In Voivodina too, a tendency towards an increasing number of skin cancers was observed. The multiphase oncologic screening of the population started in 1982. The screening included answers to questions which were put forward in a questionnaire and a screening for occult bleeding in the stool. In the communities of Lovćenac and Feketić out of 6102 persons over 40 years of age included in the voters' registration lists, 5555 responded to the screening. In this population altogether 31 persons with skin cancers were detected, which indicates that the yearly age specific incidence for persons over 40 years in the above mentioned communities amounted to 186.0/100 000. In the same period the compared to the same age specific incidence for the whole Voivodina was 62.09, 19.4 % of these patients were detected due to the answers in the questionnaire.

KEY WORDS

skin cancers, early detection, population screening, questionnaires, Voivodina

INTRODUCTION

Malignant neoplasms of the skin (cancers) have several epidemiologic characteristics; they can be divided into malignant melanoma (MM, code 172) and other malignant neoplasms of the skin (cancers, code 173 according to the 9th revision of the International Classification of Diseases). From the therapeutic point of view MM unfortunately still presents an extremely serious problem, while other malignant neoplasms of the skin, if detected early, can be in the majority of cases successfully treated.

The skin is especially suitable for development of certain malignant neoplasms. However, available data in the last decade indicate a rather low mortality rate. All over the world including the two million population of Voivodina, there are great differences between the annual incidence (all new cases per 100 000) and the mortality rate (number of death/100 000) considering the code 173; 24.2:0.84. In MM such diversities are only slightly expressed 4.66:1.86. The mortality rate in Voivodina discloses that concerning MM males are twice more endangered as females 2.62:1.25. On

