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EDITORIAL

Dear Readers, Contributors and Friends,

At the beginning, the good news deserving of announcement is the successive increase of the impact factor of "International Journal of Occupational Medicine and Environmental Health" which for 2012 amounted to 1.305. Such a good result one may attribute to the hard work (to say immodestly) of Editorial Board, but first of all it is due to a good cooperation with our Contributors and Reviewers. We appreciate this promotion and we will still make every effort to reach even better score soon.

In the present issue you will find as many as 16 articles all covering different topics. Let me please discuss them shortly to encourage you to read all papers *in extenso.*

The contents is opened with a retrospective review of cytogenetic studies on methyl isocyanate (MIC). The authors, R.M. Samarth et al., remind the Bophal gas disaster in 1984 in India, causing thousands of deaths due to the leakage of poisonous MIC into the environment and summarize its abysmal consequences in terms of genetic disorders, low birth weight, congenital malformations and variations in the functional expression of genes.

The need for molecular cytogenetic investigations is postulated to build up a cytogenetic database of the surviving population since the next generation is probably also at risk.

The next paper by J. Śmigielski et al. presents the results of a study on health and life style-related determinants of the longevity in the sample of 1004 respondents, male residents of the city of Łódź.

They found negative influence of tobacco smoking, additional use of salt at meals and consumption of sweets; and a positive contribution of the rich in fish and yellow cheese diet, as well as consumed in moderate amounts alcohol; the level of physical activity among the examined men was too low to affect longevity.

B. Tobiasz-Adamczyk et al. come up with an assessment of the relationship between determinants of psychosocial work environment and mortality in older age. In their cohort study of 727 participants, conducted during 7-year follow up period, significant differences in the number of deaths occurred regarding disproportion between physical demands and control in men; those with low physical demands and low control died three times more often than those with high control, regardless of the level of demands.

Examination of the benefits obtained from the use of portable amplification systems by female primary school teachers with functional dysphonia is depicted by R. Bovo et al. It turned out, accordingly to the expectations, that vocal amplifiers may be an effective form of prevention of reduction of potential organic damage to vocal folds.

A. Aleksić et al. analyze job stress in terms of education, age and the presence of cardiovascular and endocrine/metabolic diseases. "High strain" and "pressure" jobs were most frequently identified among low-educated and young men. No association between cardiovascular and endocrine/metabolic disorders and job stress was observed.

Another analysis concerning the role of general and occupational stress in the relationship between workaholism and the intensity of work-family/family-work conflict is presented by M. Hauk and J. Chodkiewicz. The authors indicate that general stress is an important mediator of relationship between workaholism recognized as an addiction and work-family conflicts, whereas occupational stress is the only mediator. Both kinds of stress were not significant mediators in the relationship between workaholism recognized as behavioral tendency and the conflicts.

The quality of life of patients who return to work after the past spinal stenosis surgery is evaluated in the study of 58 operated subjects by A. Truszczyńska et al. The study showed that 75% of patients who have not returned to work complain about decreased quality of life, which was associated with female sex, lower level of education, hard physical work and low income. The quality of life of those who returned to their work was similar to that of healthy persons.

The next paper by T. Kakiashvili et al. reviews health effects of burnout, its diagnosis, treatment and prevention. Systematic search in PubMed/Medline revealed that burnout may be a risk factor for myocardial infarction and coronary heart disease. It was also related to reduced fibrinolytic capacity to cope with stress and hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis hypoactivity. Another essential findings related to severe burnout symptoms are: lower level of cortisol awakening response (CAR), higher dehydroepiandrosterone-sulphate (DHEAS) levels and lower cortisol/DHEAS ratios. The authors conclude that evaluation of adrenal hormones via saliva samples helps predicting burnout. One should remember that psychiatric disorders may have similar symptoms but they have distinctive hormonal profiles, therefore, recognition of burnout as a medical condition would enable ordering an appropriate treatment.

The paper by T. Hintsa et al. brings up the problem of personality dispositions which may influence perceptions of work stress and examines the relationship between temperament and the effort-reward imbalance. The study with participation of 890 subjects proved that individual differences in arousability, reflected in temporal and energetic characteristics of behavior may predispose to or protect from an effort-reward imbalance at work.

The continuation of articles on the hand hygiene maintained by medical personnel, published in the former issues is the paper of the same authors i.e. A. Garus-Pakowska et al. on the use of protective gloves. It was found, during 1544 h of observations, that wearing disposable gloves by medical staff is insufficient, and as many as in 718 contacts with patients the same gloves were used several times. The problem of hepatitis B (HBV) and C (HCV) infection in healthcare workers is raised by M. Rybacki et al. The authors examined 520 subjects and found a low seroprevalence of HBV and HCV markers, similar to the one observed in general population. Infections turned out to be independent of needle stick injuries. Anyway, the conclusion is that vaccination against HBV coverage, although revealed to be high, should be improved to 100%.

The results of meta-analysis of data on the impact of cadmium on occurrence of hypertension in exposed workers are reported by T. Caciari et al. After analyzing all relevant literature, 6 articles were selected which unanimously indicate that exposure to cadmium may induce an increase in systolic and diastolic blood pressure and an increase in the prevalence of hypertension.

An interesting overview of current trends in occupational diseases (OD) registered in Poland over the years 1998–2011 is presented by N. Szeszenia-Dąbrowska and U. Wilczyńska. A significant decrease (more than 90% of cases) was recently observed in such illness units as: voice disorders, hearing loss, chronic poisonings and viral hepatitis. The mentioned above fall and improved detection of asbestos-related diseases are advantages of the current epidemiology of OD. Among disadvantages one may list underestimation, in comparison to other countries, of asthma, cancer and musculoskeletal pathologies.

The paper by P. Politański et al. reports original results of determinations of electromagnetic field (EMF) distributions emitted by mobile phones in the driver's cabin of motor vehicle simulators, which may serve for future assessment of driver physiology related to EMF. Tentatively the authors advise to keep mobile phones at distance from the head to reduce the exposure.

The results of investigations on the possible presence of yeast in soil of children's recreational sites are described by A. Wójcik et al. Fungi, among others, which are

potentially pathogenic to humans and animals e.g. *Candida* species, genus *Cryptococcus*, were found in 73.8% and in 69.0% of the examined soil samples collected in autumn and spring, respectively.

The last but not least paper by B. Bilski is aimed at assessing the audible and infrasonic noise levels in the cabins of modern agricultural tractors. The measurements showed that average audible noise levels (68.2–83.8 dB-A) have no potential to create the risk to hearing, whereas the infrasonic noise levels are considerable (87.3–111.3 dB-G) and may induce adverse effects in drivers.

We wish everybody a good time reading and we hope that the contents of this issue will prove interesting.

Additionally I am pleased to announce that as part of the Journal's development we have launched the Editorial System (http://www.editorialsystem.com/ijomeh) to facilitate the contact with Authors and Reviewers – using it will help you keep track of the progress of the publication process concerning your manuscript.

Prof. Wiesław J. Sułkowski
on behalf of the Editorial Board

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