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EDITORIAL

Dear Friends of IJOMEH,

Let me please introduce you to the contents of the July-August number of our bimonthly. In this issue you may read 15 articles including 1 review, 1 case report and 13 original papers.

The issue is opened with a global review of studies on traffic police and occupational health hazards involved in it, prepared by R.R. Patil et al. (India). Multiple research indicated that traffic policemen are highly stressed and put at risk of respiratory disorders as well as of cytogenetic abnormalities and/or carcinogenic effect due to the exposure to vehicular emissions.

Correlations between relative rates of hospital treatment or death due to ischaemic disease (IHD) and IHD-related medication among socio-occupational and economic activity groups were assessed by H. Hannerz et al. (Denmark and Germany). The investigation conducted in Denmark in 1996–2005 revealed strong correlations, which may signify that purchase of prescription for IHD-related medicines is a usable risk indicator for IHD in the working population.

The next original study by S. Sako et al. (Japan) is focused on association between task-induced stress and fatigue by examining cardiovascular responses of the subjects using different mouse positions while operating a computer under time constraints. The obtained results suggest that the distal position has fewer effects on cardiorespiratory functions, causes lower levels of sympathetic nerve activity and mental stress and produces a higher total workload than the proximal position.

The paper by A. Burkowska-But et al. (Poland) is devoted to the role of open-air inhalatoria in the air quality improvement in spa towns. Evaluating microbiological contamination of air in the 2 Polish lowland spa towns i.e., Ciechocinek and Inowrocław, enabled the authors to find a low air contamination and to conclude that the aerosol that is formed in the open-air inhalatoria has a positive influence on the air quality.

The impact of the second hand smoke (SHS) on the respiratory symptoms in young adults exposed to water pipe or cigarette smoke was examined by R.K. Zeidan et al. (Lebanon and Germany). The young non-smoker subjects appeared to demonstrate more chronic tough and elevated carbon monoxide levels when exposed to SHS, while the effect of water pipe was even more evident.

A different, more clinical subject is brought up in the paper by J. Miłoński et al. (Poland), who verified the use of videonystagmography head impulse test (VHIT) in diagnostics of vertigo. The test turned out to be useful in detection of semicircular canal injuries in about 51% cases, whereas in the caloric test a labyrinth dysfunction was found in 58%.

Occupational problems associated with regular use of microscope are reported by G. Jain and P. Shetty (India). The most common complaints of microscope users were musculoskeletal disorders of neck and back region, eye fatigue, aggravation of ametropia, headache and stress or anxiety.

W. Oniszczenko (Poland) discusses the findings of his research on temperamental determinants of trauma symptoms in firemen, policemen and soldiers. Emotional reactivity was conducive to the increased trauma symptoms intensity in firemen, whereas briskness tended to reduce this intensity only in soldiers.

The next paper, also by Polish authors, D. Gryka et al. concerns the effect of Finnish sauna bathing on lipid profile in young, physically active men. The effect turned out to be positive and 10 sauna sessions resulted in reduction of total cholesterol and LDL fraction levels during the

sessions and in gradual return of these levels to the initial values during 2 weeks after the experiment.

The comparative estimation of cytokines levels in employees exposed to the metallic mercury vapors and chlorinated hydrocarbons in the dynamics of neurological disorders formation was performed by M. Bodienkova et al. (Russia). The study showed that production intensity and interconnection between the pro- and anti-inflammatory cytokines may change in the occupational injuries of the nervous system development process. The decrease in the serum concentration of cytokines along with the increase of clinical manifestation severity may prove dysregulation of the immune system, which promotes maintaining of pathological process of neurotoxication.

A proposal for calculating the no-observed-adverse-effect level (NOAEL) for organic compounds responsible for liver toxicity based on their physicochemical properties is presented by M. Jakubowski and S. Czerczak, our colleagues from the Nofer Institute of Occupational Medicine, Łódź, Poland. According to the authors, the proposed method can improve the practice of setting exposure guidelines for the unstudied compounds.

The paper by J. Laamech et al. (Morocco and Belgium) describes blood lead, cadmium and mercury levels in children from urban, industrial and rural areas of north Morocco and determinants of some renal effects. The analysis of blood and urinary samples proved higher blood lead levels and micro albuminuria in children living in urban area which means a need to control and regulate potential sources of contamination by trace elements.

M. Błażkiewicz et al. (Poland) introduce a new method of determination of phases and symmetry in stand-to-sit-to-stand movement. The method demonstrates that the task of sitting down is a reverse task with respect to standing up in terms of the symmetry of the parameters analyzed.

The results of comparative and explorative questionnaire study on job satisfaction of occupational physicians in commercial and other delivery settings are discussed by H.N. Plomp and A.J. van der Beek (the Netherlands). They hint that not commercialising as such, but the ability of commercial occupational health services to intergrate professional values is the crucial factor in bringing about job satisfaction.

The issue is closed with the case report of M. Wiergowski et al. (Poland). The report describes severe poisoning of a 31-year old man who recreationally took 2 psychoactive substances i.e., methoxetamine and amphetamine and eventually died.

Wishing you a good reading *in extenso* of all articles.

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