

EDITORIAL

Dear Readers and Contributors,

Let me please present you the contents of the first 2012 issue of our Quarterly, which you may still freely use online thanks to the open access option.

The section of original papers is commenced with an extensive article by N. Szeszenia-Dąbrowska et al. on the exposure of the general population to asbestos in Poland caused by degradation of asbestos-cement products resulting in the release of the elementary asbestos fibers into ambient air. The estimated mean concentrations of fibers, measured under the governmental program intended to remove asbestos, equaled in different provinces from 146 to 709 f/m³; such recorded moderate levels in atmospheric air point to a relatively low degree of environmental asbestos pollution.

The next paper by H.H. Eker et al. brings up an equally important problem of the impact of work performed in the collecting and disposal of solid waste sector on the health of employees. Our Turkish colleagues found the presence of metabolic syndrome in 40.9% of the examined workers, mainly in those working in the excavation field as caterpillar operators.

Another original article by J.A. Rodriguez-Garcia and F. Ramos is focused on the incidence of acute leukemia in the proximity of some industrial facilities; it was proven that residing near a thermoelectric power plant and the point of maximum density of high-power lines may increase the risk of acute myeloblastic leukemia; with synergistic effect of both factors.

Our colleagues from Nofer Institute of Occupational Medicine, namely A. Bortkiewicz et al., describe the results of their questionnaire study analyzing subjective complaints of people living in the neighborhood of mobile phone

base stations; in their examinations including 181 men and 319 women exposed (in the case of 12% of flats) to electric fields above 0.8 V/m there was no correlation between electric field strength and the frequency of subjective symptoms, however a correlation between headache and impaired memory and distance from the base station was found. The problem of low-back pain in hospital nurses is addressed by P.-H. Lin et al. from the Taiwan University, The Republic of China; the authors indicated – in their cross-sectional survey of 217 hospital nurses – the prevalence of the disease in 82% of nurses that was significantly associated with the number of years worked by the nurses. Job satisfaction of nurses employed in Polish occupational medicine service, investigated by P. Sakowski, turned out to be full in 26% of 600 randomly selected nurses; the areas in which improvement is needed are salary and possibility of professional promotion.

The next paper by P. Pietkiewicz et al. is devoted to the methods of diagnosing vertigo, a symptom caused by the peripheral or central lesion of the vestibular system, often accompanied by work-related diseases and occupational intoxications. Comparing the testing procedures with the use of two modern assessment tools, i.e. electronystagmography (ENG) and videonystagmography (VNG), applied in the groups of patients suffering from vertigo of peripheral, central and mixed origin vs. healthy controls showed that VNG should be recommended as a valuable means to evaluate vertigo and to differentiate between peripheral and central vestibular lesion.

D. Kaleta et al. discuss in their paper the determinants of heavy smoking; the results of the global adult tobacco survey in Poland conducted in the years 2009–2010 indicated that three characteristics, i.e. age, early age at smoking

habit onset and lack of awareness of smoking-induced health consequences were significantly associated with heavy smoking among both genders.

Another original article, written by C.C. Mesquita et al. – our Portuguese contributors – is devoted to the assessment of the effect of a specific exercise program on the strength and resistance levels of lumbar flexors and extensors in warehouse workers; it was found, using measurements of trunk muscles' voluntary strength and resistance by means of isometric electronic dynamometer, that exercises promoting stretching and strengthening of the lumbar area may increase the strength of trunk extensors.

The paper by A. Al-Mobeeriek on dentist-patient communication states that patients' main concern is the courtesy followed by information interaction, moral support, explaining the procedure and understanding the patients' feelings. One might dream of transferring the opinions of

Saudi Arabia patients into other countries, where patients are usually afraid of any visits to the dentist.

And last but not least, the issue includes a case report by F. Gobba et al. from Italy presenting the case of 3 female magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) operators with implanted copper intrauterine contraceptive devices (IUDs) developing menometrorrhagia some months after a change of working time in MRI unit had been introduced; the conclusion is that MRI operators with implanted IUDs could be treated as a group of workers at particular risk of developing menometrorrhagia.

We wish you a good time reading this interesting new issue.

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