



P1. CONTRACEPTION AMONG MEDICAL STUDENTS: PREFERENCES AND KNOWLEDGE

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Context: At least 100 million cases of sexually transmitted infections are registered annually among young people and more than 2.5 million unsafe abortions are performed among adolescents (WHO, 2011). The use of contraception and remedies aimed at preventing sexually transmitted infections (e.g., condoms) among young people is at a low level. The urgency of maintaining reproductive health in young people (15-24 years old) is extremely high, since persons of this age group form the reproductive potential of the nation for the next 10 years.

Objective: Define preferences and awareness of contraception among sexually active students in higher education medical schools in Russia and several European countries.

Methods: We used the method of questioning (i.e., questionnaire of 25 questions). The first part of the questions (n=12) concerned personal experience and preferences of contraceptive methods; the second part of the questions (n=13) revealed the participants' theoretical knowledge about the contraceptive methods. A specially compiled questionnaire (both in Russian and English) was offered using publicly accessible social networks websites.

Patients: The group is a simple random sample. 213 medical students took part (156 - Russian, 57 - foreign).

Results: 86.5% of foreign students and 29.3% of Russian students use the combined contraceptive means. In Russia, young people choose low-efficiency methods (only a condom, coitus interruptus) 3 times more often than abroad; 16.7% of couples in Russia are not using contraception at all. "Double" method (i.e., combined contraception and condoms) is not used by 46.4% of Russians and 16.2% of foreign students. We show that the level of students' knowledge about contraceptive methods significantly depends on whether or not the program in their university had a dedicated course on contraception.

Conclusion: It is highly beneficial for higher education medical schools to offer dedicated courses on contraception as it helps to motivate young people to use safe and reliable contraceptive methods.

Keywords: contraception among young people, knowledge about contraception in medical students.

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