
ASSOCIATION OF EARLY DRINKING ONSET WITH SUBSEQUENT ALCOHOL ABUSE

J. Beil-Gawelczyk¹, A. Bratek², M. Banach¹, S. Beil¹

¹Department of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy Students' Scientific Society, Medical University of Silesia, Katowice, Poland ; ²Department of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, Medical University of Silesia, Katowice, Poland

Introduction: In the recent years the phenomenon of early alcohol initiation is observed. This problem is often underestimated, in spite of its numerous negative consequences.

Objectives and Aims of this study is to determine the effect of early drinking onset on subsequent alcohol dependence.

Methods: The research study was based on authors' anonymous questionnaire including questions referring to: age of alcohol initiation, age of the first blackout after drinking alcohol and the reason of drinking alcohol for the first time. In the study group there were 125 people, members of Alcoholics Anonymous, mean age 43, 83 men and 42 women. In the control group there were 231 people, mean age 25, 136 men and 95 women.

Results: In the study group alcohol initiation occurred before the age of 15 more often than in the control group (49% vs. 42%). The same correlation exists for the alcohol initiation before 12 years of age (13% vs. 8%) and is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). Drinking alcohol for the first time took place for some of the respondents before the age of 10 and significantly more often in the study group (6% vs. 2%, $p < 0.05$).

Conclusions: The obtained results allow to conclude that in patients addicted to alcohol the initiation took place earlier than in the study group (age 13-15 vs. 16-18). Also, very early alcohol initiation (<12 years) occurred more frequently in the study group (12.8% vs. 8.2%). Based on our research, we confirmed that early drinking onset is associated with subsequent alcohol dependence.