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ORIGINAL PAPER

A study of the spinal cord injured population of the Chios island of Greece

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Abstract

Objective: The objective of this study was to explore the epidemiological profile of the spinal cord injured population living on the Greek island Chios.

Methods: We interviewed the regional spinal cord injured population. Participants were recruited from the island's capital and its 52 villages. The target population was all the SCI individuals living on Chios Island (n=38), out of which 34 (response rate was 89%) patients were interviewed in their homes using an especially designed questionnaire.

Results: The mean age of the subjects at the time of the injury was 43 and the majority (n=23, 67.6%) were male. The employment status of the participants changed after the injury from 64.7% (n=22) to 32.4% (n=11). Traffic accidents were the cause of the SCI for 44.8%, with a significant difference from the other causes of injury (p<0.004). The most common level of injury was thoracic-lumbar (23.5%, n=8). The duration of hospitalization was on average 4.6 ± 3.9 months followed by treatment in rehabilitation centres. Most participants faced secondary complications which correlated significantly with age (r=0.372 p=0.03).

Conclusions: The findings revealed that traffic accidents were the main reason for SCI. More research is needed on SCIs in Greece and the development of a surveillance system for SCIs is suggested.

Key Words: Spinal Cord Injuries, Epidemiology, Public Health, Greece