

RISKY DRINKERS AND THEIR PHYSICIANS

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BACKGROUND

The study is focused on prevalence of risky and harmful drinking in Czech adults and on opinions of Czech GPs about the impact of alcohol on health of their patients. Self-assessment of doctors' effectiveness in reduction of patients' alcohol consumption was also addressed.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The results presented are based on the National Survey on Tobacco Smoking and Alcohol Consumption (N = 1,802) [1;2] and on a survey of 294 Czech GPs carried out within the ODHIN project[3;4].

RESULTS

High risk or problem drinking was found in one in five Czech adults (Figure 1). 34% of respondents reported their doctor asked them about alcohol consumption and 8.6% received advice to reduce or stop drinking. This advice was more common for respondents over 45 years of age (Table 1). In contrast with this only 22 respondents (1.2%) felt they would need professional help [1;2]. About one third of the sample of Czech GPs considered moderate alcohol consumption as very important for good health. Greater importance doctors attributed to other risk behaviors (Figure 2). The study identified lack of time, lack of professional training and lack of funding for preventive activities as barriers to broader implementation of alcohol consumption screening and brief intervention (SBI). Only 8.5% of GPs reported they were very effective in influencing drinking habits among their patients. 32% subjectively believe their efficiency in this area would be increased with adequate specialized training (Figure 3) [3].

CONCLUSIONS

Only eight to nine percent of PHC patients receive recommendation to reduce drinking. GPs feel insecure regarding SBI to reduce alcohol consumption in patients, which could be changed if adequate education is provided. To overcome major barriers of wider implementation of SBI in PHC joint efforts and common interest of GPs, health insurance agencies and the Ministry of Health are needed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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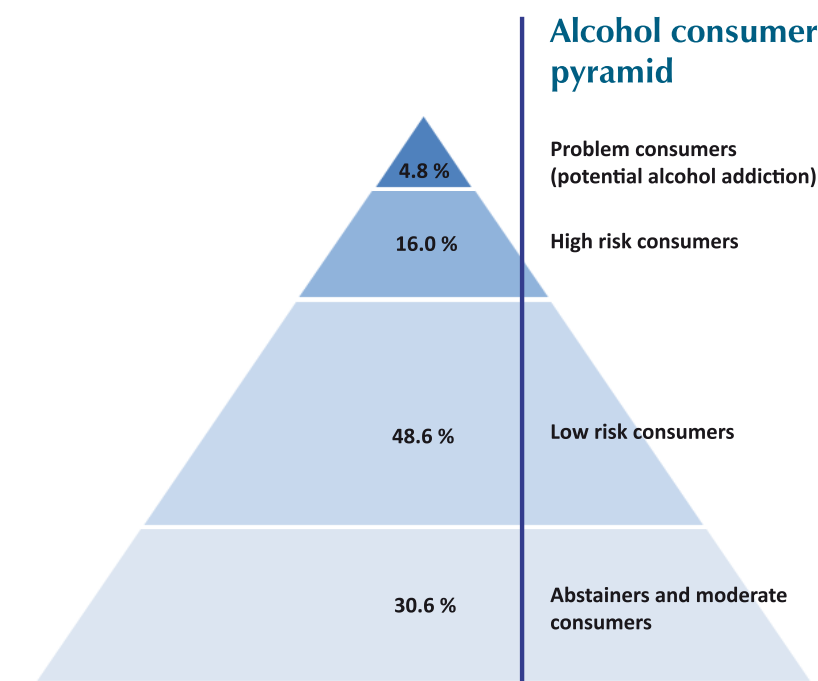


Figure 1 Pyramid of alcohol consumers (General population survey, Czech Republic, 2012)

Demographic characteristics	Physician asked about drinking	Physician recommended to reduce or stop drinking
	Percentage (95% CI)	
Overall	33.61 (31.28; 36.03)	8.60 (7.27; 10.12)
Gender		
Male	36.48 (33.12; 39.97)	10.84 (8.80; 13.28)
Female	30.71 (27.50; 34.11)	6.32 (4.76; 8.33)
Age (years)		
15-24	21.52 (16.32; 27.51)	4.04 (1.86; 7.52)
25-44	29.19 (25.61; 33.06)	5.70 (4.04; 7.96)
45-64	41.49 (37.08; 46.05)	12.24 (9.52; 15.58)
65+	39.53 (33.53; 45.79)	12.40 (8.64; 17.06)

Table 1 Physician asked about drinking and recommended reduce or stop drinking

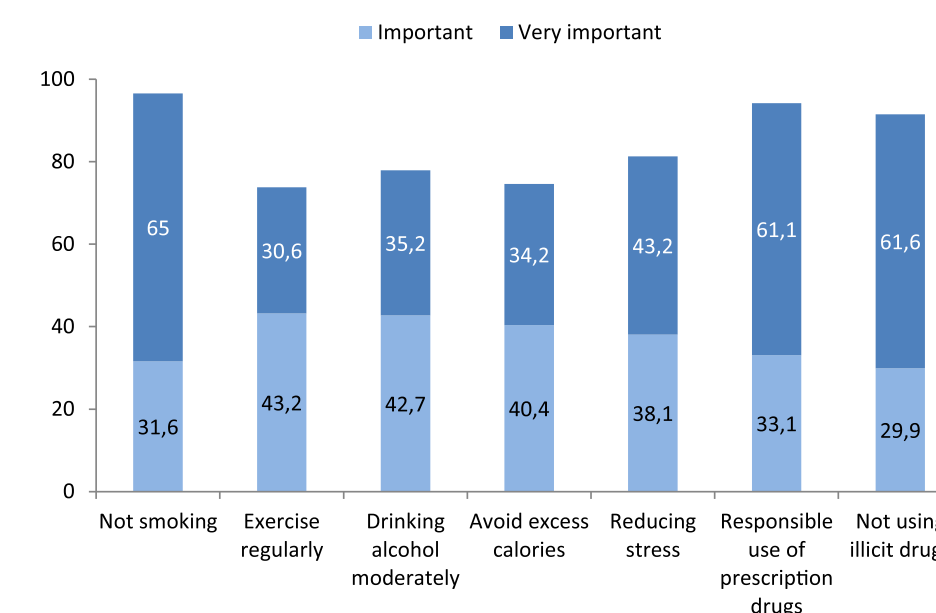


Figure 2 Importance of health behaviours for good health based on assessment of Czech GPs

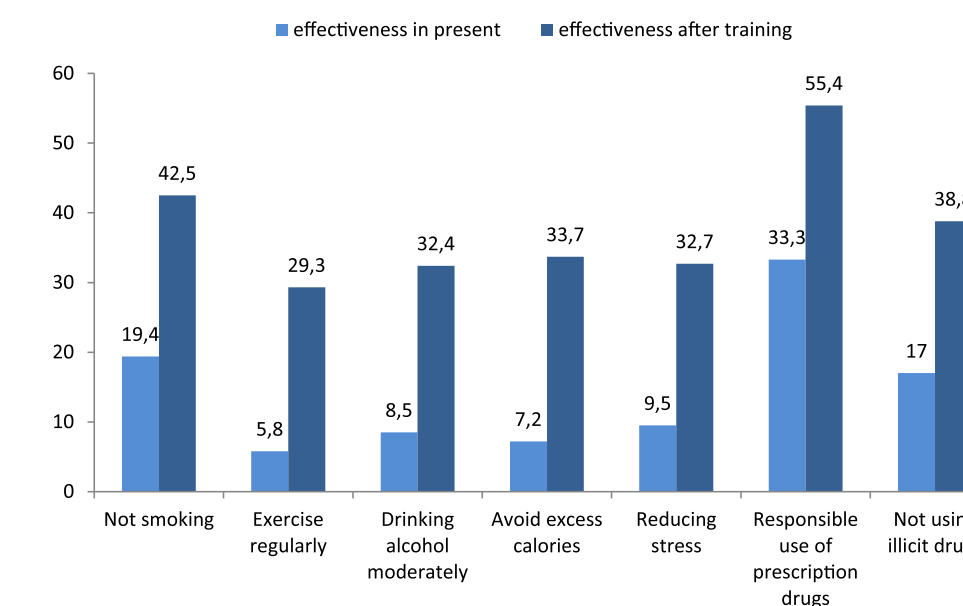


Figure 3 Self-assessment of Czech general practitioners in effectiveness to change health behaviors of patients in present and in case if received appropriate training (response category very effective)