

ABSTRACTS OF FREE PAPERS – EPIDEMIOLOGY

Prevalence of epilepsy in Phu Linh - Soc Son – Hanoi, a rural region in North Vietnam

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Background and Objective: The prevalence of epilepsy is usually quoted at about 5 per thousand populations. The epidemiological data of epilepsy is not well studied in Vietnam. In 2003, we conducted a prevalence study of epilepsy in a Vietnamese rural community near Hanoi to determine the prevalence of epilepsy.

Methods: We used the study protocol of epilepsy from the Neurological Institute of Limoges by “door-to-door” interview, to evaluate the prevalence of epilepsy among 7,852 residents of Phu Linh community of Soc Son province. The study area was about 40 km from the capital, Hanoi. The study population consisted of 3,807 males and 4,023 females. Capture-recapture method was applied to reduce missing data. Confirmation of epilepsy was based on clinical examination by neurologists from the Hanoi University of Medicine. The comparative prevalence according to the levels of education and family’s income was also performed. SPSS 10.0 program was used for analysis.

Results: Fifty-nine people suffered from epilepsy. The estimated prevalence was 7.5/1,000, 5.5/1,000 for active epilepsies. There were 47/59 patients (79.7%) with generalized seizures, 10/59 patients (17.0%) with partial seizures, and 2/59 patients (3.4%) with unclassified seizures. Of the patients, 20 were of 10 to 20 years age group (33.9%). However, there was no significant difference in the prevalence of active epilepsy among the different age groups. The first seizure was most frequently seen at age less than 10 years ($p < 0.05$). There were significant correlation between the prevalence of epilepsy and the family’s income and level of education. The prevalence of epilepsy in the poverty group was higher than those with higher family’s income. The group with low level of education also had high prevalence of epilepsy ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: The point prevalence of epilepsy in Phu Linh, a rural community in North Vietnam was 7.5/1,000. Poverty and low level of education had higher prevalence of epilepsy. The first seizure was most frequently seen at age less than 10 years.

References

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