

Public awareness about risk factors on oral cancer in Northern Germany

Language: English

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Date/Event/Venue:

July 14-17, 2010
 IADR
 Barcelona, Spain

Introduction

Oral cancer is a considerable health problem with more than 10,000 newly diagnosed cases each year in Germany. Comparably little is known about the knowledge of the public on oral cancer and its possible relationship to socioeconomic parameters. It was the aim of this project to investigate the knowledge about risk factors of oral cancer in the State of Schleswig-Holstein in Germany.

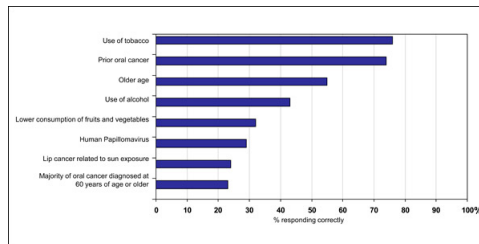
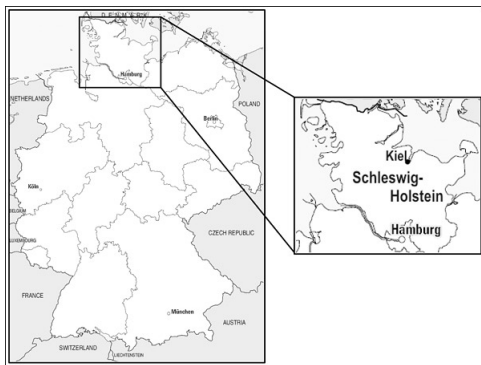


Fig. 1: Map of Germany with enlarged view of the state of Schleswig-Holstein (reference: ©Federal Agency of Cartography and Geodesy, Frankfurt, Germany)

Fig. 2: Percentage of the public who provided correct responses about risk factors

Material and Methods

A well-known German polling firm formulated a telephone-based survey based on a standardized questionnaire. This survey was validated by a pretest and a representative survey (n=1000) via computer-aided telephone interview (CATI) and carried out by the polling firm within the public of Schleswig-Holstein, Germany. Descriptive statistics of demographic variables of the sample and responses to the questionnaire were reported by means of counts and percentages. Knowledge of the risk factors was further classified according to different socioeconomic categories and their subgroups: age, employment, graduation, income. For further analysis, we calculated the mean knowledge score for all risk factors for the total sample (red-line: 48%) and each subgroup (figure 3-6). All analyses were done with the SPSS for Windows software.

Results

	Demographic	Distribution (n = 1,000)
Sex	Male	483 (48%)
	Female	517 (52%)
	Not known	-
Age	18-29	157 (16%)
	30-44	281 (28%)
	45-59	243 (24%)
	60+	319 (32%)

≥ 60

319 (32%)

Tab. 1: Demographic distribution of the sample of the public

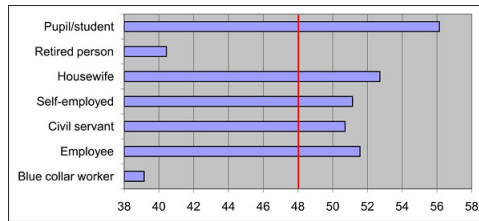
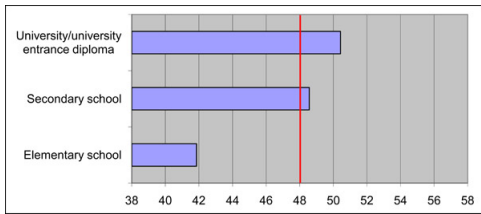


Fig. 3: Mean knowledge score of all risk factors (red-line) in relation to the subgroup 'graduation'

Fig. 4: Mean knowledge score of all risk factors (red-line) in relation to the subgroup 'employment'

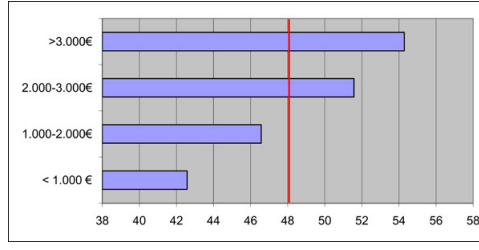
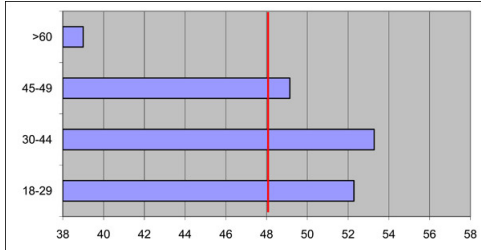


Fig. 5: Mean knowledge score of all risk factors (red-line) in relation to the subgroup 'age'

Fig. 6: Mean knowledge score of all risk factors (red-line) in relation to the subgroup 'income'

Conclusions

The survey illustrated that the public of Schleswig-Holstein is not well-informed about the risk factors of oral cancer. In addition, the low level of knowledge was associated with a low level of certain socioeconomic factors. Improved targeted health education and health promotion strategies for the public are recommended to improve early detection and ultimately the prognosis of oral cancer.

Literature

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Acknowledgements

The project is supported by the Deutsche Krebshilfe (German Cancer Aid, No. 107385).

This Poster was submitted by Dr. Katrin Hertrampf.

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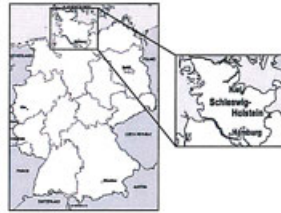


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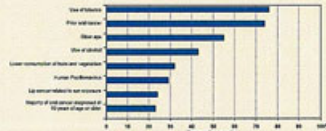


Figure 2: Percentage of the public who provided correct responses about risk factors

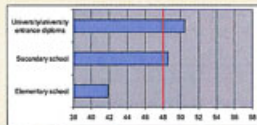


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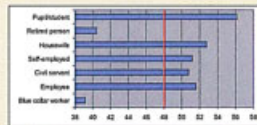


Figure 4: Mean knowledge score of all risk factors (red-line) in relation to the subgroup 'employment'

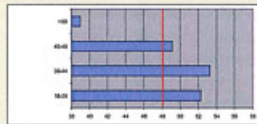


Figure 5: Mean knowledge score of all risk factors (red-line) in relation to the subgroup 'age'

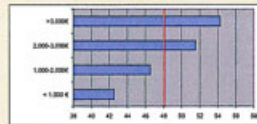


Figure 6: Mean knowledge score of all risk factors (red-line) in relation to the subgroup 'income'

Conclusions:

The survey illustrated that the public of Schleswig-Holstein is not well-informed about the risk factors of oral cancer. In addition, the low level of knowledge was associated with a low level of certain socioeconomic factors. Improved targeted health education and health promotion strategies for the public are recommended to improve early detection and ultimately the prognosis of oral cancer.

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 Petersen G, Agreus G, Ohlin B, Stenlund H, Ekstrand J, Kvaloy W, Kvaloy W. 2004 Oral cancer knowledge and information status among North German adults. *J Public Health* 26: 133-140
 Center M, Petersen G, Kvaloy W, Kvaloy W, Kvaloy W, Kvaloy W. 2005 Socioeconomic inequalities and oral cancer: a systematic review and meta-analysis of case-control studies. *Int J Cancer* 115: 2814-2824
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