

SCABIES IN SLOVENIA DURING THE 1971-95 PERIOD

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ABSTRACT

Scabies started to appear in Slovenia in larger number by the end of sixties. For this reason a reporting system was enforced by the Ministry of Health. Reliable data are available since 1971. The peak incidence (4,3‰) with 8646 cases was reached in 1972 while a second peak with 4412 cases (2,2‰) appeared in 1982. The yearly incidence of over 1000 cases still persists.

From the clinical experience it was concluded that the majority of cases were imported by guest workers from the underdeveloped regions of former Yugoslavia.

KEY WORDS

scabies, epidemiology, Slovenia, 1971-1995 period

INTRODUCTION

In the past the spread of scabies in various populations accompanied periods of wars and other major distresses, especially, when economic and hygienic conditions were rather poor. Available data confirm that the incidence of scabies in Europe has had a cyclical course, the causes of which are still not fully understood. As already mentioned war conditions favor the outbreak of scabies. However, other factors seem to be important too. In Great Britain the incidence of scabies was rising before the outbreak of World War II. While during the years 1944-46 between 10% and 15% of all patients attending dermatological departments were affected with scabies, by the 1950-53 period this figure dropped to 1% (1).

Since 1963 the incidence in Europe was on increase again. In various parts of Britain during the years 1964-66 7% to 11% of dermatologic patients were affected. In France the surge of scabies was also noted in 1963 (2) and was explained by immigration of workers from North Africa. In Germany numerous patients with scabies started to appear by the year 1965 (3,4).

In Slovenia the reappearance of scabies was most probably connected with the epidemiological situation concerning scabies in the republics of former Yugoslavia, where it started to spread from the eastern to western parts in 1963. In Macedonia the epidemic of scabies started in 1963 following the terrible earthquake in Skopje in 1962 (5). At the same time or a bit later the spread was noted in Bosnia (6)

