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HPV: is it a female problem only? Heterosexual and non-heterosexual men knowledge about human papilloma virus (HPV) in Poland.

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Introduction:

Recently there have been many social campaigns about vaccinations as a prevention against human papilloma virus (HPV) in Poland. Not only cervical, vulvar and vaginal cancer, but also anal and oropharyngeal cancer can be caused by the virus, which concerns males as well. Nevertheless, HPV vaccinations are voluntary and mostly not refunded in Poland.

The aim of this study was to analyse heterosexual and non-heterosexual men knowledge about HPV infections and HPV-related cancers in Poland.

Materials and methods:

Authors' survey intended for men was published in social media. A group of 169 males (115 heterosexual, 48 non-heterosexual) aged 14-39 responded.

Results:

While 75,6% of the heterosexual and 87,5% of the non-heterosexual men heard about the HPV, only 3,48% of the first group responders and 16,67% of the second were vaccinated against this virus. Knowledge about HPV was most frequently obtained from the Internet (103 responders) then media (48) and relatives (40). 27,8% of the heterosexuals link HPV infections with development of anal cancer and 36,5% with oropharyngeal cancer comparing to 56,3% and 43,8% in non-heterosexual group respectively. What is more, 24,3% of heterosexual and 33,3% of non-heterosexual men relate testicular cancer with the HPV infection. 88,2% of responders think that both females and males should be vaccinated against the virus, while 56,8% is aware of HPV vaccines availability in Poland. According to 84% of men, HPV vaccination should be obligatory.

Conclusions:

Knowledge about the HPV-related cancers among polish males, both heterosexual and non-heterosexual is unsatisfactory. Moreover, HPV vaccines awareness does not correlate with vaccination rate. Consequently, there is a serious need to broaden educational programmes into males. In our opinion, refunded HPV vaccines might significantly increase the vaccination rate.

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