

**SYMPTOMATIC PERIPHERAL OSTEOARTHRITIS (SPOA) AS A CAUSE OF LONG TERM DISABILITY (LTD) COMPARED TO OTHER MAJOR DISEASE GROUPS (MDG) IN GREEK ADULT GENERAL POPULATION**

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**Objectives:** To assess the prevalence of LTD associated with SPOA or any other MDG in Greek adult general population was one of the objectives of a cross-sectional population-based epidemiological study of the rheumatic diseases (RD) in Greece (ESORDIG study).

**Methods:** This study was conducted in 2 urban (UR), 2 suburban (SU) and 5 rural (RU) communities, located in north, central and south Greece, and having a total adult population of 14,233 subjects. All adult (>18 years old) population of 2 UR, 1 SU and 4 RU communities (8,547 subjects) was included in the study, along with 2,100 randomly selected subjects from 1 SU (1:3) and 1 RU (1:2) communities. The study was based on a standardized questionnaire, clinical evaluation and laboratory investigation, when necessary, and was performed by rheumatologists, who visited the target population at home either from door-to-door or after an appointment. SPOA, including knee, hip and hand OA, was diagnosed according to ACR classification criteria. LTD was defined as "limitation of occupational or any other activities because of a long-term physical or mental disorder, compared to other people of the same age and sex in good health".

**Results:** A total of 8,740 subjects participated in the study (response rate 82.1%). The age and sex adjusted prevalence (ASA-prevalence) of SPOA in the total target adult general population (TAGP) was 7.9% (95% CI 7.5-8.3). The ASA-prevalence of LTD due to SPOA in the TAGP was 1.6% (95% CI 1.4-1.8). It was significantly higher among women (2.6%, 95% CI 2.3-2.9) than men (0.5%, 95% CI 0.38-0.62) ( $p<0.0005$ ), while there were not significant differences between UR, SU and RU population. The ASA-prevalence of LTD due to SPOA increased with age, being 0.01%, 1.6% and 5.9% in the age groups 19-44, 45-64 and >64 years, respectively ( $p<0.0005$ ). The overall ASA-prevalence of LTD associated with any disorder in the TAGP was 9.2% (95% CI 8.7-9.7) and SPOA was the third most common cause (17%), following the group of all other RD (30.2%) and cardiovascular diseases (21.7%). Analysis for sex, age and community showed that in women and the age groups 45-64 and >64 years SPOA was the second (22.2%) and first (33.4%) most common cause of LTD, respectively.

**Conclusion:** These findings indicate that symptomatic peripheral osteoarthritis causes a high burden in the society, since it is not only very common in the adult general population, but it is also the third most common cause of long term disability compared to all other major disease groups.