

**PREVALENCE OF ASTHMA IN SCHOOLCHILDREN IN BARANYA COUNTY,  
HUNGARY**

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The prevalence of childhood asthma has been increasing all over the world in the past decades. The present study was meant to determine the prevalence of asthma and asthmatic-symptoms in schoolchildren from Baranya county, Hungary. A structured survey was carried out in 15 schools (six of them in a big city, nine in small towns and villages) in January and February, 2003, including 2499, 6-7-year-old and 13-14-year-old children (of them 1228 boys). The International Study for Asthma and Allergies in Childhood (ISAAC) Stage 1 protocol translated into Hungarian language was used. The crude prevalence rates for "wheesing-ever", "wheesing in the previous 12 months" and "physician-diagnosed asthma" were 19.8%, 6.8% and 8.2%, respectively. In accordance with the expectations the prevalence in the boys and in the 6-7-year-olds was higher than in the girls and in the 13-14-year-olds and surprisingly, it was somewhat higher in the schools of small towns and villages than in the schools of the big city. The chi-square test yielded no significant differences. In sum it can be concluded that the prevalence of asthma and asthmatic-symptoms in schoolchildren in Baranya county, Hungary is higher than that published so far, and it is similar to the incidence found in Central and Eastern European countries, while it is lower than the incidence detected in the developed countries.

