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**PREVALENCE OF WHEEZY BRONCHITIS IN INFANCY IN RETHYMNON, CRETE,
GREECE**

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Aim: The aim of our study was to calculate the prevalence of wheezy bronchitis in our area in relation to the risk factors.

Methods-Material: We studied 79 infants 1-12 months old that were born in 2002. The parameters analyzed were: the age, the sex, the place of living, the socio-economic status, the family and personal history, the days of inpatient stay, the laboratory results, the treatment, and the seasonal distribution during the period 1/11/2002 until 31/3/2003.

Results: The 64.55% were males belonging to the age group 7-12 months. The 62.02% of the infants were bottle-fed. The 63.30% of the infants were living in farmer's area and the 54.42% were of low socio-economic status. The 64.55% of the infants had positive family history of atopy. The 70.88% of the infants had normal chest X-ray, and normal values for CRP (66.66%), WBCs (55.69%), lymphocytes (79.74%). 69.62% had increased count of neutrophils. All the infants responded to the antiasthmatic treatment and to the administration of methylprednisolone.

Conclusions: The prevalence of wheezy bronchitis is 12.9%, while the incidence is 31.46% yearly. We have concluded that in great proportion some environmental factors play role for this epidemic of our days. The seasonal distribution of the viral respiratory infections and the predominance of inhaled allergens and the levels of humidity, the bottle feeding, the positive family history of atopy, the laboratory findings and the response to the antiasthmatic treatment and the methyl prednisolone all help to characterize the wheezy bronchitis as an early appearance of asthma.

