

**THE PREVALENCE OF NASAL SYMPTOMS IN MACEDONIA****R.D. Isjanovska<sup>1</sup>, E.G. Vlaski<sup>2</sup>, K.B. Stavric<sup>3</sup>, L.M. Seckova<sup>2</sup>, M.S. Kimovska<sup>2</sup>**<sup>1</sup>*Institute of Epidemiology With Biostatistics and Medical Informatics* <sup>2</sup>*Department of Pulmonology*<sup>3</sup>*Department of Immunology, University Children's Hospital, Skopje, Macedonia**Isjanovska@yahoo.com*

**Aim:** We report our analyses of the ISAAC phase III written questionnaire survey in schoolchildren related to the prevalence of nasal symptoms in Macedonia.

**Materials and methods:** The self-reported data from 3026 children aged 13-14 years from 17-state randomly chosen schools from Skopje were collected between December 2001 and March 2002. The results were analyzed with Student's t-test for difference between percentages.

**Results:** The response rate was 90.87%. 51.81% of the children were male and 48.18% female. The following prevalences were determined: nasal symptoms ever without a cold or a flu of 30.0%, similar in both genders (30.3% in boys and 29.7% in girls); nasal symptoms in past 12 months of 23.1% with the sex equally represented (23.1% and 23.0%); ocular symptoms associated with nasal symptoms of 5.8% (4.8% and 6.7%) with insignificantly higher prevalence in girls ( $p=0.245$ ). Seasonal symptoms peaked in November to February when 62.2% of respondents experienced symptoms. The symptoms were least prevalent in summer and then started to increase again in September (March/October in 37.8%) ( $p=0.000$ ). Related to interference with daily activities of nasal symptoms in the past 12 months and hay fever ever the prevalences were 12.8% and 6.7% respectively without a significant difference between the different genders.

**Conclusion:** Macedonia is among the centres with low prevalences of allergic nasal symptoms if compared to data reported from ISAAC phase I in 1998. Nasal symptoms are equally represented in both genders and their seasonal variation points to rhinitis as a consequence of hypersensitivity to house dust mite.

