

Epidemiologia delle malattie cardiovascolari in età da lavoro

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KEY WORDS

Epidemiology; cardiovascular diseases; job stress

SUMMARY

«Epidemiology of cardiovascular disease in subjects at working age». Background: *Cardiovascular mortality from the second half of 1970s has progressively decreased in Italy, in particular in the northern regions, in relation to the reduction of coronary mortality and cerebral-vascular incidents.* Objectives: *To concentrate mainly on Italian epidemiological studies that have explored the status of cardiovascular diseases among working adults.* Methods: *A review of epidemiological studies carried out in Italy on these topics was made.* Results and Conclusion: *The marked reduction in coronary mortality rates observed in the last twenty years does not correspond to a concomitant reduction in the incidence of the disease. Therefore, the prevalence of chronic coronary heart disease, in particular in the less severe forms, is increasing in Italy. The demand for the assessment of residual working capacity for these patients is therefore increasing as well. Differences also exist in the socio-occupational gradient in coronary heart disease, reinforcing the need for cooperation between occupational physicians and cardiologists aimed at cardiovascular prevention and health promotion in work settings. In this perspective work stress should be considered as a relevant factor. The good reliability of the Karasek's questionnaire, as well as the association between job stress and blood pressure observed in work- and population-based Italian samples, indicates that this method of evaluating job stress may be used in health monitoring programmes in work settings.*