

**UPPER RESPIRATORY TRACT DISEASES IN SELF EVALUATION OF HEALTH
STATUS OF POLISH STUDENTS BASED ON THE SF 36 QUESTIONNAIRE**

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Studying requires both physical and psychological effort, as the time of the average student is divided between studying, passing the exams, and social life. A lot of students for the first time find themselves in the situation in which they have to take care of themselves. The statistical student shows rather good physical condition throughout the year. Just like every social group students require appropriate health care. Upper respiratory tract symptoms among students are the most common cause of reporting to general practitioners. At the same time they represent the most common cause of absenteeism in classes and lectures. External factors such as the environment pollution, tobacco smoking, unhygienic habits, poor socio-economic conditions, stress, diet, too high or too low temperature and humidity all increase morbidity in inflammatory diseases of upper airways. The evaluation of frequency of upper respiratory tract diseases among Polish students was the aim of the study. Survey was conducted among 247 students of medicine and dentistry in the Pomeranian Medical University and physical training students of the Zielona Góra University. SF 36 questionnaire with few additional questions concerning health and disease was used in the study. Acquired data were categorized and analyzed statistically. Results obtained reflect an array of behavioral patterns undertaken by the students which had both positive and negative influence on the health status. More than 80% of medical students treat their upper respiratory infections by themselves. Both surveyed groups stated that infections of the nose, throat and sinuses were among the most common diseases that they suffered from since the beginning of their studies. Its worth mentioning that only 10% of students sought professional help while suffering from their upper respiratory tract diseases. Around 35% of surveyed students neglected their symptoms and waited until the disease runs its course. Most of the medical

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students believe that stress associated with their studies and the amount of material that has to be absorbed negatively contributes to their susceptibility to upper respiratory tract diseases.