

INTRODUCTION AND AIM OF THE WORK

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Bronchial asthma is a common respiratory disorder in children. There is a relative paucity of data concerning the epidemiology of childhood asthma (Aaronson, 1980). The exact figures on incidence and prevalence vary from study to study. At any given time approximately 3% of the population is considered to have asthma, but this undoubtedly is a gross under-estimate. It is probable that the true prevalence is at least 2 to 3 times this figure (Pearlman and Bierman, 1980).

It is well known that bronchial asthma in children has its complication and handicaps (Dhew, 1970; Hindi-Alexander and Cropp, 1981). The mortality rate among asthma is approximately 0.1% per year a relative low, yet significant rate. However, the morbidity in asthma is extra ordinary high. It is a source of chronic fatigue that may interfere with sleep, school performance and with normal exercise and physical development. It may affect child psychologic growth and development (Pearlman and Bierman, 1980).

In Egypt, the magnitude of the problem of childhood asthma is becoming a subject of study.

It is difficult to try to postulate a common mechanism for bronchial asthma pathogenesis which is very intricate and complicated (Corrao, 1980). There are many reasons to suspect that immunologic mechanisms are of major importance in the genesis of asthma (Orgel et al., 1975; Turner-Warwick, 1981; Bundgaard et al., 1982; Siraganian and Hook, 1983).

The aims of the present work are to study some epidemiological and immunological aspects of bronchial asthma among school children in Benha city and to compare the obtained results with those of similar studies in other countries.

Benha is the main city of Kalyobia Governorate. It is a suburb, 50 kilometers to the north of Cairo. It is surrounded by villages. Total population number is 312,266 capita.