

KiGGS – The German Health Interview and Examination Survey for Children and Adolescents

Abstract Principal Publication

Bundesgesundheitsbl – Gesundheitsforsch – Gesundheitsschutz 2007 · 50: 863-870

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Medicine use in children and adolescents. Data collection and first results of the German Health Interview and Examination Survey for Children and Adolescents (KiGGS)

Abstract In the German Health Interview and Examination Survey for Children and Adolescents (KiGGS), data on the current use of medicines during the last 7 days prior to the examination were collected from 17,450 subjects aged 0 to 17 years by means of a standardised interview conducted by a physician. 50.8 % of all children and adolescents reported to have used at least 1 medication. Prevalence was found to be highest (74.9 %) in the age group 0 to 2 years. Girls showed with 53.1% a significantly higher prevalence rate than boys (48.7 %). Children from families with low socioeconomic status and children from migrant families stated a less frequent use of medication compared to children from families with higher socio economic status and no migration background. Most frequently, the boys and girls used medicines for the treatment of respiratory tract conditions (ATC code R00: 16.8%). This was followed by Alimentary System and Metabolism (ATC code A00: 16.0%) and Dermatological Preparations (ATC code D00: 9.7%). The most frequent indications included with 12.4% of all medicines reported Other Specified Prophylactic Measures (ICD code Z29.8), with 11% Acute Rhinopharyngitis (ICD code J00), and with 10.9 % Cough (ICD code R05). Most of the drugs named were prescribed by a doctor (58%), one quarter (25%) was independently bought without prescription, 14% came from other sources, including the medicine chest, and 2% were prescribed by a non-medical practitioner. Regarding the duration of use, short-term use (less than 1 week: 55%) was encountered most frequently, while a duration of use of at least one year was reported for 13% of all medicines named. The results presented here describe the key points of medicine use among children and adolescents in Germany and are representative for this population segment. Based on the extensive data collected, further aspects, such as co- and multi-medication, are addressed. In addition, special drug segments of public health interest shall be represented in the future.

Keywords Health survey - Children - Adolescents - Medicine use - ATC classes - Indication
