

Letter to Editor**Prevalence of clinical varicocele in Iran****To the Editor**

Prevalence of clinical varicocele in adolescent and young population has been reported from 15 to 22.9% in different sources¹⁻⁴. There are few if any population-based studies from Iran addressing the issue. The usefulness of such estimates are three-fold: they elucidate the role of ethnicity in the disease prevalence, make global projection through estimate pooling possible, and are instrumental in priority setting and selection of screening programs.

In a military screening program of 1348 recruits aged 18-30 (mean: 23.7) years, prevalence of clinical varicocele was estimated at 15.6% (95% CI: \pm 1.9%) which seems comparable to those of similar reports¹⁻⁴. One physician examined all of the participants in the upright position and made a diagnosis of varicocele

when any of the following were observed: typical appearance on inspection, typical bag of worms sensation on palpation, and cough or Valsalva's induced impulse while palpating the spermatic cord. Population of military recruits is a common framework for prevalence studies and several of the reports of varicocele prevalence were from such populations^{2,5} who are very much representative of the healthy young subjects.

Varicocele has been implicated in the pathogenesis of testicular atrophy and about 15 to 20% of adults with varicocele are infertile^{3,6}. The relatively high prevalence of varicocele supports the need for routine health visit or screening programs for adolescents or young adults^{6,7}.

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