FEMALE ALCOHOLISM AS A SOCIAL FACTOR

Abstract
The purpose of the study is to identify the degree of risk of alcohol consumption by young women, using a 11-item questionnaire “AUDIT” (Russia, 1982). The study involved N = 100 female respondents aged from 17 to 40 years old.

Keywords: alcohol, female alcoholism, alcohol addiction, alcoholic drinks, female respondents, social factor.

Introduction
Alcohol abuse by the population is a serious problem of modern society; it has both unfavorable medical and social consequences, since it is one of the most significant causes of increased mortality, morbidity and disability.
Numerous studies have shown a link between the average per capita consumption of alcohol and mortality in a population. Up to 17% of female mortality, in one way or another, is associated with alcohol use. There is an intense (threatening) increase in female alcoholism, although it develops 3-5 times less than in men [12, C. 638-642].

However, in accordance with recent statistics, there has been a tendency to reduce the differences in male and female morbidity. In particular, it has been pointed out that if in previous years among pupils and students alcohol abuse was more common among boys than among girls, then at present these indicators are equalized, and in some youth subpopulations girls who drink are quantitatively superior to drinking men. The ratio of female to male among patients with alcoholism in Russia in 1991 was 1: 9, by 1995 it was 1: 6, and is currently at the level of 1: 5 [1, C. 27].

Recent studies have shown that 80% - 94% of high school girls consume alcoholic liquors, and in large cities of Russia the number of girls drinking alcohol is greater compared to their male peers. In all the areas surveyed, students of the secondary specialized education system consume alcoholic beverages more intensively than schoolchildren. The analysis of the age dynamics of alcohol consumption showed that the number of Russian adolescents who do not consume alcoholic beverages gradually decreases with age. This is especially noticeable in girls.

Most researchers conclude that female alcoholism, as compared with male alcohol addiction, develops more often at a later age (on average by 5 years), although recent studies have revealed that the age differences are being erased today [7, C. 883-889]. The psychologists tend to highlight its special severity and malignancy [8, C. 1633-1636]. Women suffering from alcoholism, gradually lose the trust of the family, their colleagues; they often lose their jobs for various reasons, their behavior and lifestyle becomes riotous, their wages are
random and, as a result, they lose their families. Often, though not always, the female body is quickly destroyed by the influence of large doses of alcohol. However, in general, the mechanism of the development of the disease is the same for both sexes, as is the same mechanism of treatment.

V.B. Altschuler believes that the malignancy of female alcoholism is determined by the predominance of either negative or positive prognosis [3. C. 22-35]. The authors attribute the following negative prognosis factors to female alcoholism:

- combined alcoholism of mother and father;
- the age of onset of alcohol abuse (before 25 years);
- the prevalence of unstable and epileptoid traits of character.

The positive prognosis factors include:

- the absence of family alcoholism;
- the age of onset of abuse after 25 years;
- the predominance of sthenic character traits [1, C. 27].

Numerous domestic and foreign studies have shown that a serious risk factor for the development of alcoholism in female of any age is the influence of a spouse partner who abuses alcohol [5. C. 223-229]. Many female respondents with alcohol problems reported that up to 70% of their husbands also abuse alcohol. The phenomenon of co-addiction is based on the role alignment, giving homogeneity to the family system [9. C. 171-187]. The alcoholic expansion of the husband in relation to the wife is explained by the desire of the husband to achieve spiritual and sexual unity in the family. In this case, alcohol is a means of intrafamily adaptation. As foreign studies have shown, the increase in women’s drinking after marriage is directly related to the amount of alcohol their husbands consumed before marriage.

**Material and methods**
To assess the risk of alcohol consumption by women, we used the “AUDIT” test (Russia, 1982) with N=100 female respondents aged from 17 to 40 years old. The subjects were asked to answer 11 questions about the frequency and amount of alcohol consumption, as well as their behavior in a state of intoxication.

According to the results obtained, alcoholism was diagnosed in 2% of the female respondents; 12% of the respondents occasionally go on a binge. Furthermore, the test results showed that 19% of the respondents drink regularly, whereas 32% drink 2-4 times a month. The test also revealed that 25% of the female respondents drink once a month. Nevertheless, only 10% of the respondents never drink alcohol.

**Results and conclusions**

The survey showed that 2% of the female respondents fail to control the alcohol consumption and do not remember how many doses of alcohol a day they take. 19% of the respondents drink regularly; this phenomenon is usually associated with stress, which the respondents find difficult to overcome. 32% of the respondents drink once or twice a week, which is close to alcoholism. 25% drink alcohol once a month, which is the dividing line between the drinker and the first stage of alcoholism. Thus, it can be concluded that 90% of the respondents have already developed alcohol addiction. However, an integrated approach to solving this problem will reduce the level of female alcoholism in the country.

**References**


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