ERFURT MALE COHORT STUDY (ERFORT STUDY). STUDY DESIGN AND DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS

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SUMMARY

Objectives: The main objective of ERFORT Study is to investigate cardiovascular risk factors, life-style related factors and psychosocial factors with regard to total and cause-specific mortality and morbidity. This paper describes the study design, frequency data on cardiovascular and psychosocial factors at baseline survey, and findings of three 5 year follow-up medical examinations. Life status was followed for 30 years.

Methods: The Erfurt Male Cohort Study (ERFORT Study) is a population-based prospective cohort study and has its origin in the WHO initiated feasibility study to acquire experience in multi-factorial intervention programs. The baseline survey in 1973–75 examined a random population-based sample of 1,160 males aged 35–61 years (brutto response rate 74.6 %) from the city of Erfurt, East Germany.

Results: Standardized and mostly validated methods were applied for a collection of data on cardiovascular risk factors, lifestyle-related and psychosocial factors, blood tests and ECG. Three consecutive follow-up examinations yielded datasets of 907, 740 and 609 subjects' re-examination in 1978–79, 1983–85 and 1988–90. Cardiovascular diseases such as myocardial infarction, angina pectoris, and claudication intermittent approximately doubled within a 15-year follow-up. Prevalence of diabetes strongly increases from 2.8 % at baseline to 12.0 % at the 15-years follow up. High blood pressure (≥160/95 mm Hg) only slightly increased, whereas the antihypertensive treatment increased from 8.7% to 33.6%.

Conclusions: This data set of a German cohort followed for several decades is an outstanding database to answer questions about long-term associations between biological and psychosocial factors and mortality in men.

Key words: cohort, men, cardiovascular risk factors, East Germany, life status

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