HEALTHY BEHAVIOURS, LIFESTYLE PATTERNS AND
SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC DETERMINANTS OF THE
METABOLIC SYNDROME

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SUMMARY

Aim: The aim of this study was to examine the influence of healthy behaviours, lifestyle patterns and sociodemographic factors on risk of the metabolic syndrome (MS) in adult residents of rural, small town and large urban areas in Poland.

Material and methods: Cross-sectional analysis of randomly selected representative sample of 1,187 men and women aged 20–74 years participating in the nationwide health survey WOBASZ. Metabolic syndrome was defined by AHA/NCEP criteria (2005). Analysed healthy behaviours included nonsmoking, healthy weight, adequate fruits and vegetables consumption, regular leisure-time physical activity. The 4 lifestyle factors were summed to create a lifestyle index (range 0–4).

Results: Regardless of gender healthy weight, adequate fruits and vegetables consumption and physical activity were associated with lower odds of MS. Non-smoking was significantly related to the lower odds ratio of MS only among men. Following all 4 lifestyle factors was the strongest protective factor against having MS. Being higher educated, in the 20–34 years old cohort, living in the rural area were the most important sociodemographic factors reducing risk of MS.

Conclusions: The obtained results support the need for effective promotion of healthy behaviors and lifestyle patterns, especially in demonstrated high-risk sub-populations. Due to important differences in metabolic risk between various sociodemographic groups, health promotion interventions should be specific in respect to the targeted subpopulations.

Key words: lifestyle, healthy behaviours, lifestyle index, metabolic syndrome

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