

Pubertal Development and Gonadotropic Hormone Levels in Serum of Romany (Gypsy) Girls in Slovakia

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ABSTRACT The relationships between gonadotropic hormone (FSH, LH) concentration to the chronological age and sexual maturation were investigated in Romany (Gypsy) and non-Romany girls aged 9-15 years from Slovakia. The researchers observed a little higher FSH levels in the Romany in comparison with the non-Romany ones. These differences were statistically significant between the girls aged 12, 13 and 14 years. Also higher LH levels were observed in the Romany girls, but without statistical significance. The gonadotropic hormone concentrations relationship to the somatic puberty in girls were studied. In the girls the gonadotropic hormone concentrations in relation to the pubic hairiness and mamma development degree were studied. The Romany girls demonstrated a little higher FSH levels in comparison with non-Romany ones within the mamma and pubic hairiness development degrees 2, 3 and 4. Statistically significant difference were stated in the pubic hairiness and mamma development degrees 2 and 3. LH levels of the Romany girls were higher in comparison with the non-Romany ones in the mamma and pubic hairiness development degrees 1, 2 and 5 and the differences were not statistically significant. Based on these results as well as on the world literature data the presence of the ethnic differences in the studied hormone levels could be assumed. Their cause, however, is unknown perhaps due to decreased ovarian sensitivity or some other factors. The menarche represents the phenomena of logically reliable parameter for the sexual girls' maturity. The middle menarche age in the Romany girls was 13.8 years and 13.1 years in the non-Romany ones. The Romany girls were behind the non-Romany ones by 0.7 year, that is, approximately 8 months. Another interesting finding is represented by the fact that the Romany children were behind the non-Romany ones living in the same region in regard to the studied sexual parameter development and menarche start. This is in contrast with the general opinion regarding early Romany children sexual development.