

A HISTORY OF POLIOMYELITIS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC - PART I

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SUMMARY

The incidence of poliomyelitis in the Czech Republic shows four epidemiologically different phases recorded during a lifetime of one human generation: endemicity (until 1938), epidemicity (1939 to 1956), repression (1957 to 1960) and elimination (1961 till now). The phase of the endemic incidence of poliomyelitis studied in this paper finished in 1938. Since 1919 when poliomyelitis notification was started, three waves of increasing though low mortality were observed: in 1926, 1932 and 1936 (0.27, 0.43 and 0.38 per 100 000, respectively). Between 1919 and 1938 the mortality increased in children over one year but it remained relatively highest in infants under one year of age. The poliomyelitis death rates were high between 1928 and 1938, 23.6 % on the average. Such high rates might be attributable to the underrated morbidity cases in comparison with a rather reliably notified polio mortality. The period between 1919 and 1938 represented the end of the endemic incidence of poliomyelitis in the Czech countries, and it could be considered as preepidemic.

Key words: polio, mortality, endemic incidence

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