LETTERS

The unique features of primary hyperparathyroidism in developing countries and the problem of vitamin D deficiency

To the Editor: The recent article from India in this journal1 and studies2,3 from poor developing countries demonstrate that primary hyperparathyroidism (PHPT) is diagnosed at younger ages in the East compared to the West. In our own experience of 177 patients (unpublished data) in Shariati hospital, a tertiary care centre in Iran, the mean age of patients was 41.9±13 years. This being the case, studies from developed countries have reported recognition of PHPT at much older ages. Whether PHPT affects patients from poor countries at younger ages or the more symptomatic presentation of the disease leads to sooner diagnosis in them, the culprits seem to be vitamin D deficiency and probably low calcium intake.4,5,6 When we consider the fact that biochemical screening tests and routine check-ups are performed in the West and yet the mean age of patients in developed countries is more or less 10 years older than eastern patients, we wake up to the depth of problem. It is now that we hear the alarm of vitamin D deficiency and sense the necessity to implement proper actions.

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References