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## **STATE OF THE CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM UNDER EXPOSURE TO HARMFUL RISK FACTORS IN MINING INDUSTRY WORKERS**

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Currently, one of the most significant problems in professional pulmonology is the issue of improving the quality of early diagnosis of dust lung diseases, the development of which is associated with exposure to dust aerosols of varying degrees of fibrogenicity. A systematic approach to early diagnosis of dust lung diseases will contribute to timely diagnosis, and will also allow predicting the development and course of respiratory and hemodynamic disorders, and contribute to the timely treatment of complications such as chronic cor pulmonale.

The article provides an analysis of the data of foreign and domestic authors on the most common adverse occupational risk factors for the occurrence and condition of cardio-vascular system for workers in the mining industry. Exposure to the harmful dust factor increases the risk of hospitalization for not only respiratory but also cardiovascular diseases. However, the mechanisms of etiology, pathogenesis, features of the course of cardiovascular diseases in mining workers, a number of issues on this issue remain poorly understood. In this regard, a differentiated approach is needed to study working conditions in the mining industry, based on real production situations, using a wide range of medical and biological indicators of the health of workers, a probabilistic assessment of the negative consequences of the impact of working environment factors on the health of workers in this sector.

**Keywords:** mining industry, occupational diseases, cardiovascular system, endothelial dysfunction.

The causes of diseases of the cardiovascular system indicate a great influence of adverse environmental factors and working conditions in the workplace [9,11,27, 57 ]. The interaction and combination of these factors is especially negative . This is confirmed by the research data of Z.S. Teregulova et al ., who showed that noise at workplaces exceeds the permissible level by 31-34% above the norm, vibration - by 22.2%, dust - by 11.1%, which is a mutually aggravating factor (the so-called "triad" negative risk factors) and accelerates the occurrence of pathological conditions [34].

G.I. Korshunov et al . cite digital data from the State Committee of Statistics of the Russian Federation that miners aged 40-65 years with pneumoconiosis or vibration disease had cardiovascular pathology in 26.3% at the initial medical examination [25]. For comparison, data are given for the same age group of people who were not exposed to negative professional factors; they had cardiovascular diseases in 11.9%. This indicates that under the influence of harmful production factors, the risk of cardiovascular diseases more than doubles.

Epidemiological studies show that exposure to particulate matter in the mining industry is also a risk factor for cardiovascular disease. For example, recent studies have shown that long-term silica dust inhalation increases the risk of death not only from respiratory disease but also from cardiovascular disease, revealing an exposure-



response relationship between cumulative silica dust exposure and cardiovascular mortality. diseases [26,48].

The most common in the structure of cardiovascular diseases among workers in the mining industry are coronary heart disease (CHD) and arterial hypertension (AH). There is evidence that recently these diseases tend to grow and rejuvenate [4,21,41]. AH, being one of the most common CVD diseases, in addition to being a separate disease, is one of the most significant risk factors for cardiovascular diseases, in particular, coronary artery disease. It has been proven that a significant increase in risk is observed, starting from the level of systolic blood pressure of about 140 mm Hg. [3,10,39,40 ].

M.K. Tashmukhamedova showed that the frequency and level of increase in blood pressure of workers in the mining industry depends on age and length of service under the influence of harmful production factors. A significant increase in cases of hypertension was most often observed in groups of people with more than 10 years of work experience and at an age of more than 50 years [32].

S.K. Karabalin et al . presented the results of the prevalence of hypertension in the population of miners of the Karaganda coal basin, working in underground conditions, which is 35.6% and significantly exceeds that among surface workers. The authors found that AH is diagnosed in underground miners already at the young age of 30–39 years, while it is observed among surface workers at the age of 40–49 years [23].

This trend is also indicated by A.S. Baidina et al . [7], N.V. Zaitseva et al . [20], especially when exposed to harmful factors of production, the most aggravating of them is dust pollution of the air at the workplace.

Currently, the role of industrial vibration as a chronic stressor leading to the development of maladjustment has been established , and is also a risk factor for the occurrence of cardiovascular diseases and, in particular, hypertension [22,27,60]. Various works indicate a high frequency of AH in patients with vibration disease (VD) [6,21,38,61]. But what influences vibration, especially with prolonged exposure, on the occurrence and development of AH is still unclear. There is also no answer to the question whether hypertension in this case is an “independent” disease or a syndrome of vibration exposure. Some authors found that “vibration is a starting impulse for early uncompensated activation of lipid peroxidation (LPO) with depression of the antioxidant system (AOS) in leukocytes and platelets, high severity of inflammation processes, hormonal and metabolic disorders” [16, 42-44]. It has been shown that as a result of these processes, endothelial dysfunction develops with impaired release and utilization of nitric oxide and activation of the production of vasoconstrictor factors [2,14,20,29]. The same mechanisms play a certain role in the development of AH, which makes it extremely important to study AH in workers exposed to vibration for a long time [ 13,17]. Damage to the vascular endothelium in HB, aggravated by the presence of hypertension, is a predictor of hemocirculatory disorders that lead to severe trophic disorders, which determines the severity of the course, progression of the disease, and loss of professional ability to work [8,19,30]. A direct damaging effect of vibration on the vascular intima is assumed [21,44,66].

HE. Gerasimenko, V.A. Drobyshev, S.G. Abramovich [15], when studying endothelial dysfunction in patients with HF in combination with AH, revealed an increased content of cellular endothelial markers - TGF- $\beta$ 1 - in 1.8, PDGF-BB - in 1.5, VEGF - in 4.0, fibronectin - by 1.8, thrombospondin and thrombomodulin - by 2.0 and 1.4 times, respectively ( $p < 0.05$ ), which are predictors of cardiovascular risk.

R.A. Baraeva pointed out that the combination of vibration disease in AH, regardless of the type of vibration, there was a pronounced thickening of the intima-media complex, which indicates that remodeling of the vascular wall is developing [8].

Thus, prolonged vibration exposure increases the severity of vascular disorders that occur in the pathogenesis of hypertension, leading to the occurrence GB, the development of coronary artery disease, the frequent development of painless myocardial ischemia and the formation of small and large foci of myocardial infarction without a typical clinical picture.

O.Yu. Korotenko reported that in coal mine workers in Kuzbass, the wall thickness and mass index of the left ventricular myocardium were significantly higher in people with hypertension, and the longitudinal deformation of the left ventricle was significantly less, which is probably influenced by a complex of harmful occupational factors [24].

S.V. Tretyakov noted an increase in the longitudinal systolic function of the right ventricle against the background of a deterioration in its global diastolic function in workers exposed to industrial vibrations and suffering from hypertension [35].

Great importance in the occurrence of hypertension is given to psycho-emotional factors and depressive states. Thus, many authors emphasize that one of the frequent factors in the etiology of hypertension in modern society is considered to be professional stress or work stress arising from an imbalance between the requirements of work and control over work [ 5,72,75 ].

In particular, in a recent study by Y. Taouk et al ., based on a meta-analysis of 45 cohort studies, found an association between stress , high workload and morbidity and a 50% risk of death from CHD [79].

Some studies show that occupational noise has an impact on an increased risk of hypertension, coronary artery disease and stroke [ 50,81 ]. Yes , L. R. , Teixeira , F. \_ Pega , a . M. \_ Dzhambov et al . a relationship has been proven between exposure to occupational noise in the workplace ( $\geq 85$  dBA ) and the occurrence and its impact on the prevalence, morbidity and mortality of coronary artery disease, stroke and hypertension [80].

Several studies have shown that living in a cold climate or cooling the body increases CVD mortality [18,44,54,77]. The underlying mechanisms between low temperatures and mortality are not entirely clear. It is hypothesized that cold stress activates the sympathetic nervous system and the endocrine system and can cause cardiovascular stress due to increased blood pressure, blood viscosity and vasoconstriction [1,45,78].

M. \_ Kivimäki , I. \_ \_ \_ Kawachi found in vitro that exposure to cold is associated with increased blood pressure and changes in heart rate, but the effects depend on the type of cooling, the part of the body being cooled, and individual factors [61]. Working in extreme cold environments, such as in cold stores, is associated with hypertension. Work in a hot climate has a similar effect on the cardiovascular system, although research in this area is not enough [20,25,55].

Many studies confirm the high incidence of CHD (about 19%) among miners of the most working age (35-40 years). At the same time, work experience in this industry is 10 years or more. This figure is five times higher than the incidence of coronary artery disease among workers not employed in the mining industry. Moreover, in workers of mining enterprises, the authors showed a significant prevalence of atypical and painless forms of the disease. An increase in the incidence of coronary artery disease can be traced with the aging of workers and is associated with the length of work experience, which is associated with cases of angina pectoris and myocardial infarction [33,37].

M.K. Tashmukhamedova , when analyzing the prevalence of individual forms of coronary artery disease, indicated the occurrence of angina pectoris among the examined workers in the range from 2.5% to 7.8%. The author also confirmed that the frequency of coronary artery disease increases with age. Thus, among the examined persons aged 40-49 years, IHD occurred in 4.7-8.8% of cases, and among those over 50 years old - in 15.8-23.5% [32].

Studies of mortality and air pollution have also shown their influence on the risk of coronary artery disease. The mechanisms are not well understood, but it has been suggested that "particle air pollution induces a low-grade pulmonary inflammatory response and subsequent release of pro-inflammatory cytokines. This can lead to increased blood clotting, causing cardiovascular events in susceptible subjects" [ 36,74,82 ] . Due to long-term exposure to coal dust, miners usually develop lipid disorders and are susceptible to CVD [37,52,59,62]. Aldehydes such as acrolein are ubiquitous pollutants found in car exhaust, cigarettes, wood and coal smoke. Oral exposure to acrolein can induce or exacerbate dyslipidemia , as well as elevated plasma cholesterol and triglyceride levels, which increase the risk of CVD [48,49].

There are data in the literature on changes in heart rate variability associated with atmospheric air pollution with particulate matter [ 11,73 ]. Acute exposure to particulate air pollution has also been shown to increase the risk of ST segment depression in patients with CAD, as well as increase emissions from pacemakers [83 ] .

In workers who are heavily exposed to inorganic dust during their work shift, the concentration of interleukin-6 (IL-6) and fibrinogen in the blood increases. IL-6 is released from the bronchial mucosa and stimulates the production of fibrinogen in the liver. There is also an association between respiratory symptoms of CAD, further supporting the link between airway inflammation and CAD [56].

Inflammation can also contribute to increased levels of pulse wave velocity . For example Y. Saijo et al . reported a significant progressive increase in pulse wave

velocity with highly sensitive levels of C-reactive protein in men after controlling for traditional CVD risk factors such as age, body mass index, systolic BP, heart rate, smoking, history of hypertension, hyperlipidemia, and diabetes [65,76].

N. Andoh et al. also determined that pulse wave velocity was significantly related to serum levels of the highly sensitive C-reactive protein [46]. Studies have shown that pulse wave velocity increases with age and with hypertension [53], increased heart rate [68,70,81], and diabetes [69]. Inhaled silica particles can initiate cardiovascular inflammation through direct exposure to small particles that penetrate the lung epithelium into the cardiovascular system [67], or through indirect effects mediated by an inflammatory response.

There are a few works that draw a parallel between increased systemic inflammation and pneumoconiosis. Yes, R. Zhai et al. reported that serum levels of cytokines such as IL-6 were associated with pneumoconiosis in a Chinese sample [87].

JS Lee et al. suggested that high serum IL-8 levels in Korean subjects were associated with pneumoconiosis, and serum tumor necrosis factor- $\alpha$  levels were associated with progression of pneumoconiosis at 1-year follow-up [64], but not at 3-year follow-up [63]. In addition, case studies of pneumoconiosis in China have identified associations between pneumoconiosis and genetic polymorphisms associated with inflammatory markers such as E-selectin [84,85] or inflammasome (nodular receptor protein 3) [58]. The authors suggest that long-term exposure to silica dust can trigger an inflammatory response and damage artery walls, leading to atherosclerosis and cardiovascular events. Although the hypothesis needs to be confirmed using large-scale prospective cohort studies.

Increased arterial stiffness is thought to increase the risk of CVD. However, pulse wave velocity only reflects the stiffness of medium and large arteries and closely correlates with carotid-femoral pulse wave velocity, which is the gold standard for assessing the stiffness of large arteries [71,86,87].

In a study of the impact of noise effects on the cardiovascular system, it was shown that continuous noise resulted in an increase in the risk of CHD mainly during the shortest follow-up period, when most subjects were still working, but in the presence of impulsive noise and the associated workload, an excess risk of CHD persisted long after the patients retired [12,31].

In a study by H. W. Davies et al., on CHD risk and noise exposure, much higher relative risks were associated with length of service in miners [50].

It has been suggested that noise may have direct physiological stress responses through the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis with secretion of stress hormones followed by an increase in BP and heart rate, strong risk factors for CHD in the long term [51].

According to S. Morrell, R. Taylor, DA Lyle (1997) noise can cause complications, for example by causing arrhythmia - an example of short-term effects. Noise can also have adverse psychosocial effects such as sleep problems or stress-related behavioral changes such as drinking alcohol or smoking - all risk factors for CHD with short and long term effects.

Like noise exposure, shift work also entails adverse psychosocial effects such as lack of social support and possible imbalance between effort and reward at work, and shift work can also cause CHD due to behavioral and circadian rhythms/mechanisms associated with the disorder. sleep [44,83]. In their review, Boggild and Knutsson (1999) concluded that, in general, shift workers have a 40% increased risk of CHD.

In a later article on the working environment of Danish shift and day workers, Björ B., Burström L., Eriksson K. et al. [47] found that shift work is commonly associated with other work environment factors that have been shown to be associated with CHD, workplace noise exposure and exercise being a triad of factors.

In the vast majority of studies devoted to the practical issues of studying risk factors for cardiovascular disease, traditional risk factors are taken into account. However, as established by other studies, the development of cardiovascular diseases is greatly influenced by harmful factors of the working environment and the labor process. Most of the works recognize not an isolated, but a complex effect of adverse production factors of various nature. Some of them have been studied more, others less. One of the harmful production factors in the mining industry that accompanies the entire technological process is air pollution with various toxic substances and the occurrence of occupational pneumoconiosis, dust bronchitis, etc. However, as it turns out, even short-term exposure to dust and chemical air pollution increases the risk of hospitalization for not only respiratory, but also cardiovascular diseases.

However, information on the prevalence of diseases of the circulatory system among workers working in hazardous working conditions is scarce and is presented mainly by the results of cross-sectional studies. Despite numerous studies on the mechanisms of etiology, pathogenesis, and characteristics of the course of cardiovascular diseases in high-risk workers, a number of issues on this issue remain poorly understood. In the literature, the features of the course of coronary artery disease are not sufficiently presented, data on its structure, clinical forms, and the prognostic value of risk factors under the influence of industrial factors of a physical and toxic nature are not systematized.

In connection with the foregoing, the need for a differentiated study of the working conditions of miners, based on real production situations, is obvious. At the same time, it is necessary to use a wide range of biomedical indicators of the state of health, a probabilistic assessment of the negative consequences of exposure to risk factors in the working environment, categorization and structuring of occupational risk, and systematic risk management.

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