

Latvian Society of occupational physicians and its contribution to occupational health development

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The development of Latvian Society of occupational physicians in 20 years

❑ Society was established in December of **1994.**

❑ Number of members in the society by years:

1994 th – **35 physicians**

2004 th – **347 physicians**

20014 th – **412 physicians**

The number of members in 20 years has increased **12 times.**



Latvian Society of occupational physicians in 1994



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Latvian Society of occupational physicians in 2014



Strategy for development of Society

- Very few occupational physicians after 1990 (35 physicians)
- **Strategy - create sufficient pool of physicians** to provide health examinations and diagnostics of occupational diseases for all country;
- reorganize training process;
- re-train so called «shop physicians» working in in-house units of large companies (starting 1994).



Strategy for development of Society

- ❑ Correct political decision after 2004 - to give over rights to carry out health examinations only to occupational physicians;
- ❑ Presently there are **412 occupational physicians** in Latvia (01.01.2014.) – **1 per 2.030 employees**;
- ❑ **Occupational medicine in Latvia is independent speciality**;
- ❑ This is reason why the speciality is popular as **«second» speciality for many physicians** (family doctors, internists, neurologists etc.)



Strategy for development of Society

- ❑ The Society works in **close collaboration** with **the Institute of Occupational Safety and Environmental health; the Department of Occupational and Environmental Medicine of Riga Stradins University.**
- ❑ **The Center of Occupational Radiation medicine of Paula Stradins Clinical University hospital.**



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Main objectives of the Latvian Society of occupational physicians

- To **develop** occupational health and occupational medicine **speciality** in Latvia,
- to **participate** in occupational health and safety **strategy development** in the country,
- to help **train specialists** and to improve their qualification.



The principal activities of the Latvian Society of occupational physicians

- ❑ Organization of the **training for postgraduates** on occupational health and medicine:
 - **residency** – 4 years;
 - **refresher courses** for physicians on current topics;
 - **society conferences**;
 - **certification** and **resertification**;



The principal activities of the Latvian Society of occupational physicians

- ❑ **Exchange of experience** in a lot of countries (in more than 50 countries in Europa, America, Asia);
- ❑ Participation in the international **conferences, meetings;**
- ❑ **Information materials** on Occupational health;
- ❑ Participation in different **EC** organizations.





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NIVA courses in Riga



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Collaboration with international partners



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Collaboration with international partners



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Residency in occupational medicine

- ❑ Training for **residents** in Occupational Health and Occupational medicine - 4 academic years programme;
- ❑ In line with **EU programme** requirements;
- ❑ On average 1-3 residents per year;
- ❑ Quality is OK as 3 of our occupational physicians already working in EU countries.



Information materials on Occupational health

- ❑ 25 years ago only few books were available in Latvian and Russian in the field of occupation health and there was also absence of foreign literature;
- ❑ currently there are **26 new handbooks** for professionals published;
- ❑ there are more than **200** leaflets published;



Information materials on Occupational health

- The first book in English
“Information notices on occupational diseases: a guide to diagnosis” (co-author M.Eglite), Luxembourg, the European Commission, 2009;

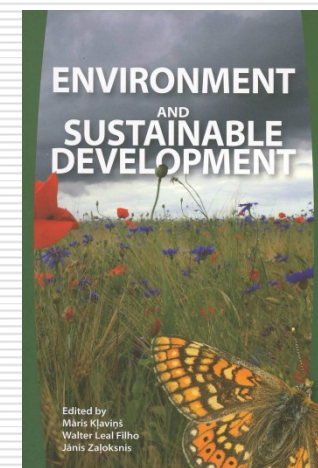
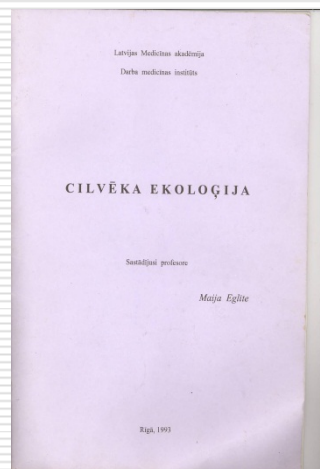
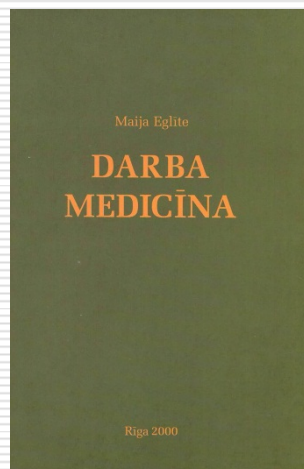
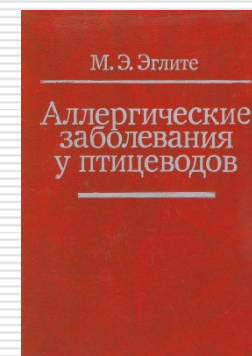
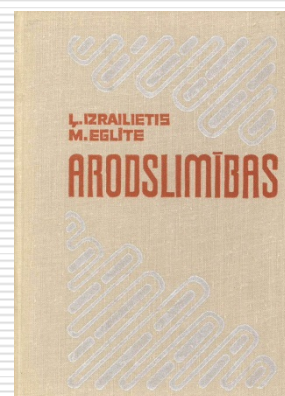
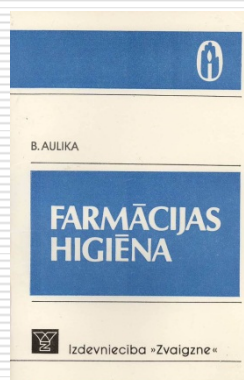
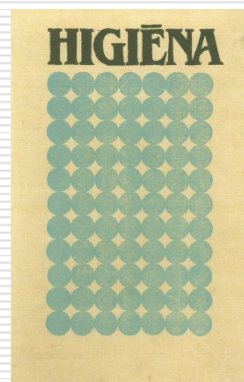
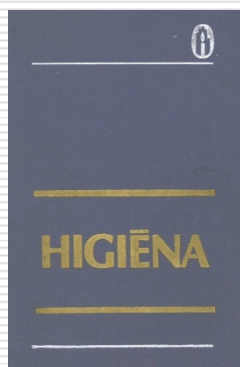


Information notices on occupational diseases: a guide to diagnosis



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Preparation of information materials (3)



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Web pages

- ❑ We have established Latvian Society of occupational physicians website:
www.arodslimibas.lv
- ❑ We help maintain website of European Agency for Safety and Health at work:
www.osha.lv



Occupational Physicians in Latvia

- ❑ We have **50 occupational physicians** working full time in occupational medicine. The most of occupational physicians work in private sector (private medical centres);
- ❑ **15 occupational physicians** are working in Occupational medicine center of University Hospital.
- ❑ **362 family doctors** have the certificate of occupational physician and are working part time job in occupational medicine;



Functions of Occupational physician (OP) in Latvia

- ❑ OP are **responsible for the mandatory health checks** (MHC) of employees;
- ❑ OP can visit work place and evaluate working conditions of employee;
- ❑ OP can give some advices for employers for safer work conditions;
- ❑ OP examines employees estimating probable occupational diseases;
- ❑ OP can prescribe medicines and treat work-related health problems.



The main results of the Society activities

- ❑ **Great changes in the system of occupational health and safety of Latvia** have happened since secession from the Soviet Union.
- ❑ **The prestige** of occupational physicians has increased in the country.
- ❑ **The Quality** of Mandatory health checks of employees is improved.



The main results of the Society activities

- ❑ **Improved** employers and employees **awareness** about occupational risk factors and their influence to human health.
- ❑ **Diagnostic of occupational diseases** is better and due to it the increased occupational morbidity.
- ❑ **Occupational morbidity** has been increased dramatically during the last 20 years.



Total Number of Occupational Doctors Registered in Latvia and Dynamics of Number of Occupational Patients Registered for the First Time per Year

