

Secular Shift in Age at Menarche in Patiala Women

Rupinder Kaur and S.P. Singh

Department of Human Biology, Punjabi University, Patiala 147 002, Punjab, India

KEYWORDS Secular Shift. Menarche. Punjab. Menarcheal Rhythm

ABSTRACT The purpose of the present investigation is to illustrate the secular shift in menarcheal age in Punjabi women. Cross sectional data on two groups of women in the age group of 20-25 years and 50-60 (spaced between 30-40 years on the time axis) from Patiala cities (Punjab) were investigated during 1997 for their menarcheal ages, rhythm of the menstrual cycle and the duration of the menstrual flow. The mean menarcheal age of the older group is 15.58 years which was experienced by these women on an average around the year 1957 A.D. The younger group experienced menarche at a mean age of 12.62 years, which corresponded to the year 1987 A.D. The intensity of the secular trends in menarcheal age comes out to be one year/decade. There has been an overall improvement in the standard of living in this part of the country due to the effects of Green Revolution which took place during that period which may be responsible for the secular trends observed in this population. The rhythm of the menstrual cycle is of 27.59 days in the younger group as compared to 28.72 days in the older age group, a difference of 1.13 days which is statistically significant. The duration of the menstrual flow is longer in the younger age group (5.18 days) as compared to that in the older age group (3.93 days). Maybe this an indication of the regularity of the menstrual flow with the passage of time.