

37 Million People In The Middle East Have Type 2 Diabetes

The prevalence of type 2 diabetes in the Middle East is estimated at 9.7%, and the region was found to have the highest prevalence of diabetes in the world.

Pharmaceutical firm AstraZeneca announced the results from a Phase III DECLARE cardiovascular outcomes trial, which included more than 17,000 patients across 882 sites in 33 countries.

In the Middle East, approximately 37 million people were found to have type 2 diabetes and the number is expected to rise dramatically.

This increase may be attributed to multiple risk factors, including an increased prevalence of obesity, physical inactivity, and change in dietary patterns.

The study, which focused on adults with type 2 diabetes, found that cardiovascular disease is the number one cause of death among people with type 2 diabetes, accounting for 52% of deaths in type 2 diabetes worldwide.

One of the earliest, most common, and most serious cardiovascular disorders in patients with diabetes is heart failure. Many sudden deaths in diabetes are related to underlying ventricular dysfunction rather than a new ischemic event.

"Heart failure is a frequent complication of diabetes that occurs relatively early throughout the disease progression," says Dr. Anamarija Gjurovic, Medical Director Gulf States at AstraZeneca.

Dr. Abdul Razzak Al Madani, President of Emirates Diabetes Society also noted, "The results from this landmark trial are especially important since heart failure is an early and frequent complication of diabetes and associated with hospitalizations that result in a considerable societal and economic burden."

The National Agenda of UAE 2021 emphasizes the importance of preventive medicine and seeks to reduce lifestyle-related diseases such as diabetes and cardiovascular diseases to ensure a longer and healthier life for citizens.

The relationship between diabetes and CVD is complex; diabetes is a risk factor for CVD and conditions such as high blood pressure and obesity, that are more common in people with diabetes, are also risk factors for CV disease.

Reducing cardiovascular risk is an essential component of diabetes management and so patients need to be better educated on how to modify cardiovascular risk factors in order to offer the best chance of improving CVD outcomes.

“Knowing that heart failure is one of the early cardiovascular complications for these patients, it also points to a shift towards an early treatment paradigm in a diabetic patient group that is highly relevant to our everyday cardiology practice,” said Dr. Abdullah Shehab, President of Emirates Cardiac Society.

Signs and symptoms of type 2 diabetes often develop slowly.

Patients need to look out for common symptoms that include increased thirst and frequent urination, increased hunger, weight loss, fatigue, blurred vision, slow-healing sores or frequent infections, as well as areas of darkened skin.

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