

Vascular disease risk: monitoring and intervention

Diabetes mellitus is a group of metabolic diseases characterized by hyperglycemia, which results from impaired insulin secretion, impaired insulin action, or both. Diabetes affects 16 million Americans and approximately 5-20 percent of the population in western societies.

Chronic hyperglycemia that is associated with diabetes results in significant morbidity and mortality. Diabetes vascular complications are profound, causing blindness, end-stage renal disease, amputation, and fatality from myocardial infarction. The national cost is approximately \$105 billion per year, and the bulk of this sum is spent on treating long-term complications.

Vascular complications deplete health care resources and significantly impact the patient's quality of life. Lowering glucose and lipid levels, controlling hyperglycemia and intervention at the first sign of complications can prevent many of the complications or their progression.

Insulin resistance and coronary artery disease go hand in hand. This ailment has several factors which include hypertension, obesity, hyperinsulinemia, hypertriglyceridemia, diabetes, small dense LDL, low HDL, hypercoagulability.

Diabetes management has been broadened over the last ten years to include medications for risk markers for vascular disease. Appropriate lifestyle management and early intervention is the goal to managing the complications of hyperglycemia. We need to work closely with our health care providers if we have indications toward chronic hyperglycemia or a family history of such.

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