

The Prevalence of Diabetes and Impaired Glucose Tolerance in a British Population

In their otherwise excellent review of global estimates for prevalence of glucose intolerance, King and Rewers (1) assert that little published data exist on European populations using currently recommended survey methods.

In 1986, we published the results of a population study of glucose intolerance in North London (2) and have recently studied another population of subjects registered with a group practice in the same part of London (3). The age-specific prevalence of IGT and diabetes in the 40- to 75-yr-old subjects without known diabetes in the combined population of the two practices is presented in Table 1.

We have also obtained data on age-specific prevalence of known diabetes in these two practices, based on data from our district diabetic register (4). These data are shown in Table 2.

These findings suggest that 1) a predominantly Caucasian U.K. population has a low prevalence of diabetes and IGT and 2) the ratio of previously diag-

Table 2—Prevalence of known diabetes in study subjects

Age (yr)	Men		Women	
	n	Known diabetes (%)	n	Known diabetes (%)
40–44	774	0.9	716	0.8
45–49	653	1.2	596	0.8
50–54	447	2.5	452	0.6
55–59	384	4.7	357	3.6
60–64	323	8.7	345	4.1
65–69	270	8.1	319	6.3
70–75	216	5.1	309	5.8
Total	3067	3.4 (95% CI 2.8–4.0%)	3094	2.6 (95% CI 2.0–3.2%)

nosed to newly diagnosed diabetes is around unity in this population.

IGT, impaired glucose tolerance; CI, confidence interval.

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Table 1—Prevalence of IGT and diabetes in 40- to 75-yr-old subjects without known diabetes

Age (yr)	Men			Women		
	n	IGT (%)	Diabetes (%)	n	IGT (%)	Diabetes (%)
40–44	181	3.9	0	225	1.3	0.9
45–49	149	4.0	0	172	2.3	1.7
50–54	111	0	2.7	156	1.9	1.9
55–59	105	2.9	1.9	144	6.2	1.4
60–64	108	4.6	5.6	145	4.8	4.1
65–69	93	6.5	2.2	124	5.6	3.2
70–75	95	8.4	6.3	111	3.6	3.6
Total	842	4.2 (2.9–5.5)*	2.3 (1.3–3.3)*	1077	3.4 (2.3–4.5)*	2.2 (1.6–3.1)*

*Number in parenthesis are 95% CIs.