

Obesity

Type 2 diabetes



Prevalence

In Quebec, in 2010-2011, 6.8% of people aged 15 years and older report having diabetes.¹ Of these, nine people out of ten have type 2 diabetes.²

In Canada, in 2014, 6.7% of the population (12 years and older) reported having diabetes, compared to 4.2% in 2001 (2.5% increase in 13 years).³ In addition, an estimated one million Canadians live with diabetes without knowing it.⁴

According to Statistics Canada's 2015 data, obese individuals are more likely to have diabetes: 14.6%, compared with 5.2% in non-obese individuals.

In 2010, the incidence of type 2 diabetes in young people (new cases diagnosed) in Canada was 1.54 case per 100,000 young people (18 years and under). Of these new cases, 95% were obese.⁵

Formerly considered to be an adult disease, type 2 diabetes has been on the rise among children and youth worldwide for the past two decades. In this regard, overweight and rapid growth in early childhood have important long-term consequences and are associated with adult obesity and its comorbidities, including hypertension, coronary heart disease and type 2 diabetes.⁶

Worldwide, in 2014, 422 million adults lived with diabetes. Since 1980, the global prevalence of diabetes has almost doubled in the adult population, from 4.7% to 8.5%, indicating an increase in associated risk factors such as overweight or obesity.⁷

Risk factors

Aging, obesity, physical inactivity, some ethnic origins and a family history of diabetes (or gestational diabetes in women) are important risk factors. However, it is possible to reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes, such as most serious illnesses, by making healthy lifestyle choices (e.g., eating well, refraining from or quitting smoking, losing excess weight and exercising)^{8,9}.

According to the World Health Organization, 90% of type 2 diabetes cases could be prevented or delayed by healthy eating, physical activity, smoking cessation and effective stress management.¹⁰

Consequences on health

When not well treated, diabetes can lead to significant complications due to damage caused by high blood glucose levels:¹¹

- damage to the nervous system resulting in loss of sensitivity at the extremities of the body;
- cardiovascular disease (infarction, hypertension, stroke, etc.);
- loss of vision;
- renal failure;
- erectile dysfunction;
- sleep apnea.

Type 2 diabetes has a significant economic burden on the Canadian health care system, accounting for 3.5% of health care expenditures.¹² Moreover, given the increase of type 2 diabetes rates among young people, they suffer complications earlier in their life, that is to say, when they become young adults on the labor market. This has significant impacts on the economic burden, both in terms of health care and number of disabilities.¹³

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