

OP-0129 – Are people with diabetes aware of CVD and its risk factors?

Findings from the IDF Taking Diabetes to Heart survey

Suvi Karuranga¹, Pouya Saeedi¹, Lucy Hammond¹, Inga Petersohn¹, Abha Kaundal¹, Paraskevi Salpea¹, Lorenzo Piemonte¹, Belma Malanda¹

¹International Diabetes Federation, Brussels, Belgium



Background

Cardiovascular diseases (CVD) are the foremost cause of death in people living with type 2 diabetes (T2D)^{1,2}. However, many people with T2D lack sufficient knowledge about the cause of diabetes and its management. The aim of this study was to explore the knowledge and awareness of CVD and related risk factors in people living with T2D, globally.

Methods

A questionnaire including 17 questions on demographic information, knowledge, awareness and education about CVD and its risk factors in people with T2D was developed and translated into 32 languages. The questionnaire was either filled online by the respondents or it was facilitated by data collectors. Categorical variables are presented as numbers and percentages.

Results

Characteristics of respondents

A total of 12,695 respondents from 133 countries completed the questionnaire, of which 52% were men and the majority (91%) were 40 years and older.

Among all IDF Regions, the Europe Region accounted for the largest percentage of respondents (43.4%), followed by the Western Pacific Region (33%).

Knowledge and awareness of CVD and risk factors

One in 10 respondents did not know about CVD and its associated risk factors, despite over nine in 10 reported having one or more CVD risk factors. Over two-thirds of respondents identified high blood pressure (78%), overweight or obesity (76%) and high cholesterol (71%) as CVD risk factors. Although the majority of respondents (63%) correctly identified that physical inactivity increases CVD risk, over one in three indicated that they were physically inactive (49%) or had high cholesterol (46%) or followed diets saturated and trans-fats (35%) (Figure 1).

Two-thirds reported that they needed more information on diabetes self-management, the signs and symptoms of CVD and how to reduce CVD risk through diet and exercise.

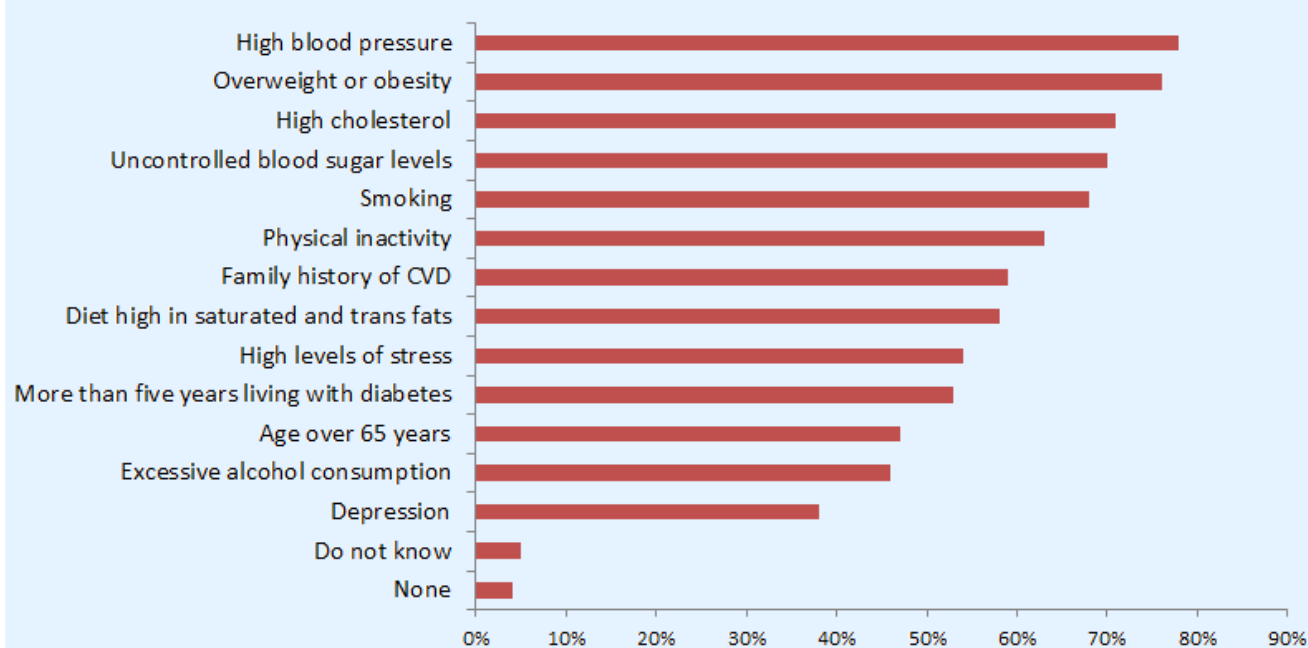


Figure 1. Knowledge of CVD risk factors

Knowledge of CVD event

Despite one in five respondents reported they have experienced a CVD event, only one in six considered themselves at high risk of CVD (Figure 2).

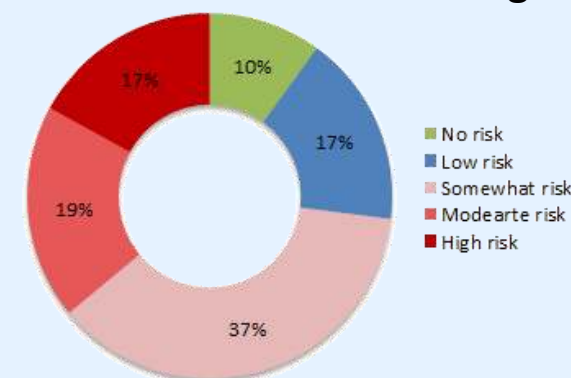


Figure 2. Self-evaluation of CVD event

Education about CVD

Three in four respondents relied on a healthcare professional (HCP) as their main source of information on CVD (Figure 3). Yet one in six were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with the information received from health professionals. Furthermore, one in four respondents had never discussed or could not remember discussing their CVD risk with a HCP.

Only one in four had discussed their CVD risk with a HCP at the time of their T2D diagnosis.



Figure 3. Main sources of CVD information

Conclusion

Despite CVD being a major cause of disability and death in people with T2D, the findings of the Taking Diabetes to Heart survey indicate that awareness of CVD and its associated risk factors remains low among people with T2D, and that the risk is not sufficiently discussed between people with T2D and their HCPs. Greater efforts are needed to increase health promotion activities with a focus on common risk factors for CVD and T2D. HCPs should be informed about their important role in increasing awareness and knowledge of CVD in people with T2D. CVD monitoring systems should be implemented among people with T2D.

References:

- World Health Organization, editor. Global health risks: mortality and burden of disease attributable to selected major risks. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization; 2009. 62 p.
- Martín-Timón I, Sevillano-Collantes C, Segura-Galindo A, et al. Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease: Have all risk factors the same strength? World J Diabetes. 2014 Aug 15; 5(4): 444-470; DOI:<http://dx.doi.org/10.4239/wjd.v5.i4.444>.

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