

Diabetic Women at Higher Risk of Heart Attack than Men



According to new research presented at the annual meeting of the European Association for the Study of Diabetes in Stockholm, diabetic women are more at risk than diabetic men of having a heart attack and other complications as they age.

Previous research also shows that diabetic women have a greater risk of cardiovascular events as compared to diabetic men but to date, it was unclear when this risk begins or how long it is expected to last. This new study by Dr Giuseppe Seghieri, Regional Health Agency, Florence, Italy, and colleagues evaluated diabetic patients living in Tuscany for a period of eight years - from 2005 to 2012. A comparative analysis was conducted between genders and the effect of age was on diabetes related excess risk of hospitalisation for acute myocardial infarction (AMI), ischaemic stroke (IS), and congestive heart failure (CHF) was investigated.

By pooling data from all Tuscan hospitals over the period 2005 to 2012, the general population registry of all inhabitants and a dataset containing the registry of all known diabetic patients, the investigators measured the effect of diabetes separately in men and in women. Their analysis showed that out of 3,192,203 inhabitants aged more than 16 years (47% males), there were 24,605 hospitalisations for AMI (16,251 in men and 8,354 in women), 26,953 for IS (14,848 in men and 12,105 in women), 17,628 for CHF (8,403 in men and 9,225 in women).

Women were found to be at 2.63 times increased risk of diabetes related excess compared to 1.96 times for men hospitalised for AMI. This translates into a 34 higher risk in women as compared to men. For those hospitalised for IS and CHF, the overall risk between men and women was similar.

When stratifying the population by age decades, it was found that diabetic women hospitalised for AMI had a higher excess risk than diabetic men, along the entire age interval between decade 45-54 years up to age 75-84 years, with the highest difference found in age class 45-54 years. Those hospitalised for IS and CHF, diabetic women had an excess risk higher than men from age 55-64 years up to 75-84 years, with the highest difference in age decade 55-64yr in both.

The authors conclude: "In this cohort of Tuscan population the excess risk of cardiovascular events linked with diabetes is significantly different between genders. With respect to AMI, diabetic women are more disadvantaged, compared to diabetic men, with a gender driven 'risk window' for women which mostly opens around menopausal age (45 years onwards). Regarding IS and CHF, it opens later, in the postmenopausal age (55 years and over), and to a lesser extent. All this should focus attention on a timely, gender oriented, prevention of cardiovascular events in people with diabetes."

Source: [Diabetologia](#)

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Published on : Fri, 18 Sep 2015