

People over 40 with type 1 diabetes and COVID-19 are more likely to be hospitalized

September 28 2021



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Adults with type 1 diabetes need to be extra cautious of COVID-19 as they are more likely to be hospitalized and die, according to a new study published in the Endocrine Society's *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology &*

Metabolism.

People with [diabetes](#) are at higher risk for COVID-19-related complications, especially if they are over the age of 40. Children with COVID-19 rarely develop severe respiratory symptoms and often remain asymptomatic. In contrast, adults experience respiratory symptoms of varying severity, with [older adults](#) and those with diabetes at higher risk of acute respiratory distress syndrome and death.

"Our study shows people over 40 with type 1 diabetes have worse outcomes from COVID-19 than children and young adults. Children and [young adults](#) experienced milder disease and a better prognosis," said Carla Demeterco-Berggren, M.D., Ph.D., of the University of California San Diego in San Diego, Calif. "These findings indicate the need for age-tailored treatments, immunization and clinical management of individuals affected by type 1 diabetes and COVID-19. Public health recommendations, including wearing masks and getting vaccinated, need to be followed by all to reduce the risk of contracting COVID-19."

The researchers studied data from 767 patients with COVID-19 and type 1 diabetes from 56 diabetes clinics across the U.S. Fifty-four percent were 18 or younger, 32% were 19-40 years old and 14% were over 40. The study found patients over 40 were seven times more likely to be hospitalized with COVID-19 compared to the younger group. No patients from the 18 and under group died, while three died from the over 40 age group and two died from the 19-40 age group.

People with diabetes and COVID-19 who were 40 and older were more likely to experience adverse outcomes such as death, diabetic ketoacidosis or severe hypoglycemia. This group also had a significantly higher prevalence of obesity, hypertension or cardiovascular disease and chronic kidney disease when compared to the younger groups.

"The goal of our study is to prevent poor COVID-19 outcomes for adults with type 1 diabetes and to highlight the need to base health care decisions on data as the COVID-19 pandemic evolves," said Demeterco-Berggren.

More information: Carla Demeterco-Berggren et al, Age and Hospitalization Risk in People with Type 1 Diabetes and COVID-19: Data from the T1D Exchange Surveillance Study, *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism* (2021).

doi.org/10.1210/clinem/dgab668

Provided by The Endocrine Society

Citation: People over 40 with type 1 diabetes and COVID-19 are more likely to be hospitalized (2021, September 28) retrieved 21 July 2023 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-09-people-diabetes-covid-hospitalized.html>

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