

Racial disparity in diabetes mostly due to lifestyle

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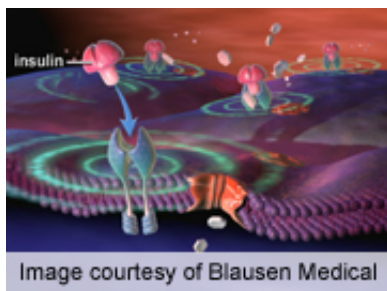


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For postmenopausal women there are large racial/ethnic differences in diabetes incidence, but these are mostly attributable to lifestyle factors, according to a study published online July 25 in *Diabetes Care*.

(HealthDay) -- For postmenopausal women there are large racial/ethnic differences in diabetes incidence, but these are mostly attributable to lifestyle factors, according to a study published online July 25 in *Diabetes Care*.

Yunsheng Ma, M.D., Ph.D., from the University of Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester, and colleagues analyzed data from 158,833 women (average baseline age, 63 years) recruited from 1993 to 1998 and followed in the Women's Health Initiative study through August 2009. The association between race/ethnicity, other potential risk factors, and the risk of diabetes was assessed.

The researchers found that 84.1 percent of participants were non-Hispanic white, 9.2 percent non-Hispanic black, 4.1 percent Hispanic, and 2.6 percent Asian. Over an average of 10.4 years of follow-up the hazard ratios for incident diabetes were 1.55, 1.67, and 1.86 for blacks, Hispanics, and Asians, respectively, compared with whites. Whites, blacks, and Hispanics categorized as low-risk for weight, physical activity, dietary quality, and smoking had 60, 69, and 63 percent lower risk for incident diabetes, respectively. Across [racial groups](#), compared with obese inactive women,

women who had both a healthy weight and were in the highest tertile of physical activity had less than one-third the risk of diabetes.

"Despite large racial/ethnic differences in diabetes incidence, most variability could be attributed to [lifestyle factors](#)," the authors write. "Our findings show that the majority of diabetes cases are preventable, and risk reduction strategies can be effectively applied to all racial/ethnic groups."

More information: [Abstract](#)
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