

One in twenty achieve remission from type 2 diabetes

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Around one in twenty people in Scotland diagnosed with type 2 diabetes achieve remission from the disease, according to research publishing November 2nd in the open-access journal *PLOS Medicine*. This suggests people are achieving remission outside of research trials and without bariatric surgery. Recognising individuals in remission, following their progress, and better understanding the factors involved in remission could lead to improved initiatives to help others.

There were an estimated 463 million people with [diabetes](#) in the world in 2019, of whom 90-95% have type 2 diabetes, and these numbers are rising due to ageing populations, growing obesity and sedentary lifestyles. Some people with type 2 diabetes have achieved [remission](#) after bariatric surgery, or after taking part in a research trial of a very [low-calorie diet](#), but it is unknown how many people in the [general population](#) are in remission. Using a national register of people with type 2 diabetes in Scotland, Mireille Captieux at the University of Edinburgh and colleagues estimated how many people were in remission in 2019 and described the characteristics of those in remission

and not in remission.

Of 162,316 patients aged over 30 years who were eligible for the analysis, 7,710—around 5%—were in remission in 2019. Individuals in remission tend to have not previously taken glucose lowering medication; have lost weight since their diagnosis; be older; have lower blood sugar levels at diagnosis; or have had [bariatric surgery](#). Understanding how many individuals are in remission as well as their characteristics creates a baseline against which to evaluate future initiatives and studies. It could also help clinicians identify patients with whom to discuss remission and weight management options.

Captieux adds, "We have been able to show, for the first time, that 1 in 20 people in Scotland with type 2 diabetes achieve remission. This is higher than expected and indicates a need for updated guidelines to support clinicians in recognising and supporting these individuals."

More information: Captieux M, Fleetwood K, Kennon B, Sattar N, Lindsay R, Guthrie B, et al. (2021) Epidemiology of type 2 diabetes remission in Scotland in 2019: A cross-sectional population-based study. *PLoS Med* 18(11): e1003828. doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1003828

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