

Forecast: 48.3 Million With Diabetes in 2050



The prevalence of diabetes is projected to be 12% of the US population — a total of 48.3 million people — by 2050 (Table 1), according to officials from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

In a *Diabetes Care* report, K.M. Venkat Narayan, MD, and col-

leagues from the CDC's Division of Diabetes Translation, incorporated changes to their previous forecast of 39 million diagnosed with diabetes by 2050. They wrote that since their previous report, the national incidence of diabetes has increased while the relative risk of death among those with the condition has declined.

The researchers also warn that the number could be higher if the rate of obesity continues to rise. The prediction assumes that the incidence of diabetes remains at the rate seen in 2004. "If incidence rates continue to rise the impact on future numbers with diabetes, and consequent health care costs, will be much more devastating," wrote Dr. Narayan.

The new projection is 9.3 million people higher than the previous estimate. The investigators said that 87% of

the increase is explained by the rise in national diabetes incidence between 2000 and 2004, and 11% is explained by the decline in the relative risk of mortality among people with diabetes.

"Other local and regional studies confirm the increase in diabetes incidence, and the reductions in relative risk of mortality may reflect decreases in risk factors and improved diabetes quality of care," they wrote.

This revised estimate is even more alarming than previously believed.

"For a chronic diseases such as diabetes, small shifts in incidence have large implications for future prevalence of and numbers with the disease. If incidence rates continue to rise, the impact on future numbers with diabetes, and consequent health care costs, will be much more devastating. Implementation of evidence-based primary prevention is this an urgent national priority," wrote Dr. Narayan and colleagues. ■

Conni Bergmann Koury, Editor-in-Chief

TABLE 1. FORECAST OF DIABETES PREVALENCE BY AGE GROUP

Age group (years)	0 to 19	20 to 44	45 to 64	65 to 74	≥ 75	All ages
2005						
Prevalence (%)	0.33	2.39	10.12	18.34	15.99	5.62
n*	0.26	2.38	7.26	3.40	2.88	16.18
95% CI	(0.22-0.30)	(2.27-2.49)	(6.98-7.53)	(3.28-3.52)	(2.74-3.02)	(15.59-16.75)
2020						
Prevalence (%)	0.46	3.59	14.52	23.32	24.20	8.88
n*	0.38	3.77	11.77	7.31	5.60	28.84
95% CI	(0.25-0.55)	(3.43-4.13)	(11.05-12.48)	(6.90-7.73)	(5.16-6.05)	(27.35-30.38)
2050						
Prevalence (%)	0.48	4.18	17.76	30.10	32.69	12.00
n*	0.50	5.19	15.90	10.88	15.81	48.28
95% CI	(0.32-0.73)	(4.59-5.87)	(14.79-17.00)	(10.22-11.58)	(14.47-17.17)	(45.05-51.53)
% change 2005 to 2050						
Prevalence (%)	45	75	75	64	104	114
n*	92	118	119	220	449	198

* Forecast of the number of people diagnosed with diabetes (in millions).

Source: *Diabetes Care*. 2006;29:2114-2116.