

Diabetics hit harder by COVID-19

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People with type 2 diabetes are at significantly elevated risk of needing intensive care if they get COVID-19. This is shown by a study comprising data on 2.6 million Swedes, of whom half a million are on the diabetes register. The study also indicates increased mortality from COVID-19 among type 2 diabetics.

In Sweden, about half a million people have diabetes, and 90 percent of them have type 2. The Swedish study has examined the number of new cases and the likelihood of hospitalization, intensive care and mortality due to COVID-19 in people with diabetes.

This study, published in *The Lancet Regional Health—Europe*, compared diabetics with controls without diabetes, matched in terms of age, gender, and region, who were randomly selected from the population. Altogether, the study comprised 2.6 million individuals in Sweden, 500,000 of whom were registered as diabetic.

"The study shows that type 2 diabetics' risk of being hospitalized for COVID-19 was 1.4 times that of non-diabetics. So that's a 40 percent higher risk," says Aidin Rawshani, researcher at Sahlgrenska Academy, University of Gothenburg.

Even with extensive adjustment for disturbance factors, a significantly increased risk of [intensive care](#) for patients with COVID-19 (1.4 times higher) and of mortality due to COVID-19 (1.5 times higher) was noted in people with type 2 diabetes, compared with matched controls.

For type 1 diabetics, a significantly higher risk was noted for all outcomes. On the other hand, no significant excess risk was noted for outcomes in statistical models with full adjustment for risk factors.

The study, which ran from 1 January to 15 August 2020, was funded by the Swedish Heart Lung Foundation. Kristina Sparreljung is its Secretary General.

"Research in the area of diabetes has been highly successful, with new treatment methods and drugs. But the number of people with [diabetes](#) is rising in Sweden. Now we hope these new research findings will be able to help save more lives," Sparreljung writes in a [press release](#) from the

Heart Lung Foundation.

More information: Aidin Rawshani et al. Severe COVID-19 in people with type 1 and type 2 diabetes in Sweden: A nationwide retrospective cohort study, *The Lancet Regional Health - Europe* (2021). [DOI: 10.1016/j.lanepe.2021.100105](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lanepe.2021.100105)

Provided by University of Gothenburg

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