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Drug Information:

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Risk of Cardiovascular Disease Increases in Adult-Onset Type 1 Diabetes

A study recently published in the European Heart Journal found that individuals with adult-onset type 1 diabetes (T1D) diagnosed before or after age 40 had a higher risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD) and mortality than the control population, but a lower CVD risk than patients with type 2 diabetes (T2D).

Type 1 Diabetes

T1D is an autoimmune disorder characterized by the immune system's T cells destruction of the beta cells; the cells responsible for producing insulin. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), T1D affects around 2 million Americans, about 5% to 10% of all diabetes cases.

The Standards of Care in Diabetes-2025 published by the American Diabetes Association state that autoantibody-based screening for presymptomatic type 1 diabetes should be offered to those with a family history of type 1 diabetes or known elevated genetic risk.

Key Findings in the Study

The study showed that people with adult-onset T1D had a higher incidence of major adverse cardiovascular events (MACE), all-cause mortality, and mortality from cardiovascular or non-cardiovascular diseases, cancer, or infection than population controls. Interestingly, they had lower MACE incidence and higher mortality from diabetic coma or ketoacidosis than people with T2D. Smoking, being overweight or obese, and poor glucose control accounted for the poor prognosis. Results were similar for T1D diagnosed in individuals older than 40, although they had lower insulin pump use and higher HbA1c than people diagnosed earlier.

What this study shows is the importance of managing modifiable factors such as smoking status and obesity to improve prognosis in these patients.



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