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Slowdown in type 2 diabetes cases

Some countries have seen a fall in new cases of type 2 diabetes according to a new review of the current evidence.

The study, published in [The BMJ](#), found that prevention strategies could be reducing the number of people receiving a [type 2 diabetes](#) diagnosis. The researchers found that after 2005 many high-income countries started to see a decline in the number of people developing [diabetes](#). They found limited evidence from low and middle income countries.

In reviewing the evidence, researchers in Australia found that whilst many studies look into diabetes prevalence (the number of people living with diabetes), few looked into diabetes incidence (the number of people being newly diagnosed).

In type 2 diabetes, the body continues to make insulin which regulates blood sugar levels. However, the body either doesn't make enough or doesn't use insulin properly.

Unlike [type 1 diabetes](#), which a patient is born with, type 2 diabetes develops later in life and is more common in people who are [obese](#) and older people although it is becoming increasingly common in children and young people. Management of the condition usually involves changes to diet and exercise. In England, about 1 in 10 people aged 45-54 years have diabetes and about 1 in 4 people aged over 75 years have diabetes. 9 in 10 cases of diabetes are type 2.

According to the review, between 1990 and 2014 the number of people developing type 2 diabetes consistently increased before becoming stable or decreasing after 2005. Between 1990 to 2005, 67% of the 100 countries studied experienced an increase in new cases. From 2006, only a third of populations continued to report an increase whilst 30% and 36% had stable or declining incidence, respectively.

Most of the countries that recently experienced stabilising type 2 diabetes trends were from Europe or East Asia.

The researchers suggest that prevention strategies, public health education and awareness campaigns "could have contributed to this flattening of rates, suggesting that worldwide efforts to curb the diabetes epidemic over the past decade might have been effective".

In a comment for the BBC, Dr Emily Burns head of research communications at Diabetes UK, reflected that whilst these findings are positive, more needs to be done to prevent further diagnoses of type 2 diabetes. "The challenges posed by obesity and unhealthy lifestyles - the two main drivers for type 2 diabetes - remain significant.

"That's why, while the findings are interesting, this study doesn't detract from the seriousness of the growing diabetes crisis and the vital prevention efforts under way to help tackle this."

This study was published in [The BMJ](#).

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