

Pre-existing diabetes for persons diagnosed with cancer associated with increased risk of death

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Patients with diabetes at the time of a cancer diagnosis have an increased risk of death compared to patients without diabetes, according to a meta-analysis of studies reported in the December 17 issue of JAMA.

improvements in diabetes care for patients with newly diagnosed cancer might reduce long-term mortality," the authors conclude.

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Approximately 20 million Americans have diabetes mellitus, which is about 7 percent of the U.S. adult population. Diabetes mellitus appears to be a risk factor for some cancers, but the effect of pre-existing diabetes on all-cause death in newly diagnosed cancer patients is less clear, according to background information in the article.

Source: JAMA and Archives Journals

Bethany B. Barone, Sc.M., of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore, and colleagues conducted a meta-analysis to examine the association of pre-existing diabetes with long-term, all-cause death in cancer patients. The researchers identified 48 articles that met criteria for the study, including 23 articles for which data could be included in the meta-analysis.

The meta-analysis (of these 23 studies) indicated that pre-existing diabetes was associated with an increase in all-cause death following cancer diagnosis, compared with individuals with normal glucose levels, across all cancer types. Additional analyses by type of cancer showed that pre-existing diabetes was significantly associated with increased long-term, all-cause death for cancers of the endometrium, breast, and colorectum. Diabetes was associated with a nonsignificant increase in risk in prostate, gastric, hepatocellular, lung and pancreatic cancer.

"Future research should determine the relative importance of different pathways to diabetes-related mortality risk. If a clinical or biological interaction between diabetes and cancer care is confirmed, subsequent trials should test whether

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