

Patient variables not linked to hemoglobin A1c targets

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(HealthDay)—Patient variables seem not to be associated with

hemoglobin A_{1c} (HbA_{1c}) targets, according to a study published online June 22 in *Diabetes Care*.

Saeid Shahraz, M.D., Ph.D., from Tufts Medical Center in Boston, and colleagues used data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey to analyze patient-reported HbA_{1c} targets set by physicians and whether there was a correlation between targets and patient characteristics. Data were included for 2,641 individuals with self-reported diabetes, of whom 1,782 responded to a question about HbA_{1c} targets.

The researchers found that 54 percent of respondents reported a target; others reported that they did not know or that no target was set. Only 4 percent of the sample reported target HbA_{1c} >7 percent. Of those reporting that a target was not set, 26 percent were older than 75 years. Of those who were not aware of their target, 70 percent were nonwhite. From 2005 to 2013 there was a decrease in the proportion responding that they did not know their target, from 30 to 10 percent. There were no correlations for variables representing demographics; medical history; biological, physical, and mental health; and health service use with reported target HbA_{1c}.

"The lack of variation with patient characteristics suggests overreliance on a general approach, without consideration of individual variation in the risks and benefits (or patient preference) of tight control," the authors write.

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