Type 2 diabetes once called ‘adult onset diabetes’, is now a disease of youth

Key Insights

- Type 2 diabetes accounts for 95% of all diabetes cases. It used to only be found in adults but has rapidly increased among young adults and children, especially in urban and poor neighborhoods, and communities of color.

- 50% of African American youth, 33% of Latino youth and 25% of white youth born in the year 2000 will get type 2 diabetes in their lifetime.

- 50 years ago, the average American consumed about 20 lbs of sugar and corn sweetener in a year. That number has risen to almost 130 lbs.

- Since the start of the U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan over 1000 Americans have all or part of their leg amputated due to injury. In that same time period, over 70,000 Californians have had all or part of their leg amputated as a result of diabetes.

What happens when you get diabetes?

The disease if left untreated, can lead to high blood pressure, stroke, kidney failure, blindness, erectile dysfunction, heart attack, amputation of limbs, and even death.

Nationally, diabetes and obesity prevalence has significantly increased over past 19 years

---


Racial/ethnic differences in diabetes prevalence are pronounced.

Type 2 diabetes (T2DM) prevalence in youth has been growing steadily. The graph above shows data from a study conducted in 3 U.S. cities. While a small study, it is indicative of the national trend. The table below shows a disproportionate prevalence of poor glycemic control among minority youth when compared to whites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Type 1 (%)</th>
<th>Type 2 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic White</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian / Pacific Islander</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>36.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>43.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(P<0.001 for both T1D and T2D)
Access to healthy food is a significant driver of diabetes epidemic

Retail Food Stores

The map above shows locations of retail food stores by type in San Francisco. Compared to the maps on page 2, note that the areas of highest level of diabetes hospitalizations relate to areas with low access to healthy food retail locations.

Poverty and quality food access

- Living in a low income neighborhood with limited access to healthy food increases one’s chance of getting diabetes by 20%³
- From 1978 to 2009, the price increase for fresh fruits and vegetables was much more significant than the price increase for sugars, sweets, and carbonated drinks (see below). High sugar consumption has been associated with diabetes⁴

Food and drink marketing

- The food and beverage industry in the U.S. spends almost $12 billion a year (one million dollars every hour of every day) targeting people to buy unhealthy food⁶
- From 2008 to 2010, children’s and teens’ exposure to full-calorie soda TV ads doubled⁷
- Companies are particularly targeting black and Latino children and youth for high-sugar foods and drinks⁷
- Black children and teens saw 80 percent to 90 percent more ads compared with white youth, including more than twice as many for Sprite, 5-hour Energy, and Vitamin Water⁷
- From 2008 to 2010, Hispanic children saw 49 percent more ads for sugary drinks and energy drinks on Spanish-language TV, and Hispanic teens saw 99 percent more ads⁷

Food and drink marketing in California schools

- In CA Schools, more than 60% of posters and signage for food products were for “discouraged foods”: candy, soda, chips⁶
- Most vending machine ads were for sugar-sweetened beverages⁶
- 71% of logos on sports equipment were for sweetened beverages⁶
- 94% of all marketing activities were from companies that make high fat, high sugar foods⁶
Maps of Oakland also show relationship between food access, poverty rates and diabetes prevalence

References

1. CDC JAMA 2003

Additional Resources

The Bigger Picture http://youthspeaks.org/thebiggerpicture/

San Francisco Sustainable Communities Maps http://www.sustainablesf.org/webpages/view/39