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Permanent Stress Can Cause Type 2 Diabetes in Men, Study Suggests

Science Daily, Feb. 7, 2013 — Men who reported permanent stress have a significantly higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes than men who reported no stress. This is the finding of a 35-year prospective follow-up study of 7,500 men in Gothenburg, by the University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

Since the 1970s, a large population based cohort study has been undertaken at the Sahlgrenska Academy, University of Gothenburg to monitor the health of men born in Gothenburg between 1915 and 1925.

Using this unique material, researchers are now able to show that permanent stress significantly increases the risk of type 2 diabetes.

Of the total sample, 6,828 men without any previous history of diabetes, coronary artery disease or stroke were analysed. A total of 899 of these men developed diabetes during the follow up.

Stress at baseline in this study was measured using a single item question in which they were asked to grade their stress level on a six-point scale, based on factors such as irritation, anxiety and difficulties in sleeping related to conditions at work or at home. At baseline, 15.5% of the men reported permanent stress related to conditions at work or home, either during the past one year or during the past five years.

The results show that men who have reported permanent stress had a 45 percent higher risk of developing diabetes, compared with men who reported to have no or periodic stress. The link between stress and diabetes has been statistically significant, even after adjusting for age, socioeconomic status, physical inactivity, BMI, systolic blood pressure and use of blood pressure-lowering medication.

"Today, stress is not recognized as a preventable cause of diabetes" says researcher Masuma Novak, who led the study. "As our study shows that there is an independent link between permanent stress and the risk of developing diabetes, which underlines the importance of preventive measure."

Journal Reference: M. Novak, L. Björck, K. W. Giang, C. Heden-Ståhl, L. Wilhelmsen, A. Rosengren. **Perceived stress and incidence of Type 2 diabetes: a 35-year follow-up study of middle-aged Swedish men.** *Diabetic Medicine*, 2013; 30 (1): e8
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