



HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

Study Predicts Big Rise in Diabetes around the World

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A new study says that every country in the world will see **diabetes** rates increase in the next 30 years if preventive steps are not taken.

Researchers from the Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington wrote the study. The researchers found there are currently 529 million people in the world with diabetes.

Researchers expect that the number will increase to around 1.3 billion people by 2050.

The majority of the cases are type 2 diabetes, the form of the disease that is linked to extreme weight, or obesity, and is largely preventable, the researchers said.

The increases in diabetes levels are not expected to be the same around the world. Some countries will be affected more than others. For example, diabetes levels are expected to reach about 17 percent in North Africa and the Middle East and about 11 percent in Latin America and the Caribbean by 2050. The predicted rate for the world is about 10 percent.

Currently, diabetes levels are around six percent, but every country will be affected, researchers said.

“The rapid rate at which diabetes is growing is not only alarming but also **challenging** for every health system in the world,” said Liane Ong, lead writer of the research paper.

Ong said diabetes is linked to a number of conditions such as heart disease and stroke.

Medical experts believe rising obesity and population changes are two of the reasons growing numbers of people are having diabetes. Diabetes is more common among older adults, the study showed. The data from 204 countries did not consider the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic because those numbers were not yet available, researchers said.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation paid for the study. It is part of a series of studies about diabetes that recently appeared in *The Lancet*.

The series in the medical publication calls for better plans to prevent the disease. Studies in the series also say more people should know that most diabetes patients live in low- and middle-income countries and are unable to get good treatment. They link issues like inequality and race to the development of the disease.

I'm John Russell.

Jennifer Rigby reported on this story for Reuters. John Russell adapted it for VOA Learning English.

Words in This Story

diabetes – *n.* a serious disease in which the body cannot properly control the amount of sugar in your blood

challenging – *adj.* difficult