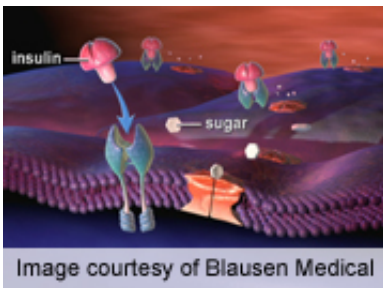


Prospective human data link mercury exposure to diabetes

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Young adults exposed to mercury have a higher risk of developing diabetes later in life, according to a study published online Feb. 19 in *Diabetes Care*.

(HealthDay)—Young adults exposed to mercury have a higher risk of developing diabetes later in life, according to a study published online Feb. 19 in *Diabetes Care*.

Noting that studies have linked methylmercury exposure to pancreatic islet β -cell dysfunction, Ka He, M.D., Sc.D., from Indiana University in Bloomington, and colleagues prospectively analyzed toenail mercury levels and incident diabetes in 3,875 young adults in the United States (20 to 32 years of age) who were free of diabetes at baseline in 1987.

Over 18 years of follow up, the researchers observed 288 cases of incident diabetes. After adjustment for various demographic and clinical factors, they found a significantly higher risk of diabetes with greater

mercury exposure (hazard ratio, 1.65 for the highest versus the lowest quintile of mercury exposure). Those with higher [mercury levels](#) at baseline also had a significantly lower homeostatic model assessment β -cell function index.

"Our results are consistent with findings from laboratory studies and provide longitudinal human data, suggesting that people with high [mercury exposure](#) in [young adulthood](#) may have elevated risk of diabetes later in life," He and colleagues conclude.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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