

Diabetes patients need to be consulted to improve treatment

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Patients with type 2 diabetes who tailor their own treatment in cooperation with their doctor can reduce their risk of complications such as heart attack with up to 20 percent. This is the result of a new Danish study from the Research Unit for General Practice, University of Copenhagen.

Patients who cooperate with their general practitioner and set [personal goals](#) for treatment while receiving continuous feedback from their doctor can reduce their risk of complications with up to 20 percent. This is one of the research results of a Danish study just published, "Diabetes care in general Practice".

"It is irrational to treat everybody the same way. We have to put in more effort for some patients than for others, and the [general practitioners](#) have to set personal goals in cooperation with the patients concerning [risk factors](#) such as blood sugar, blood pressure, [cholesterol level](#) and weight" says professor Niels de Fine Olivarius. He is the leading scientist of the study along with doctor Lars J. Hansen.

Changes in lifestyle before medicine

The study "[Diabetes care](#) in general Practice" has been running for more than 20 years with 1428 newly diagnosed patients with [type 2 diabetes](#). 745 general practitioners have followed the patients and half of these general practitioners have received education concerning an

improvement of the treatment of patients with type 2 diabetes based on the patients' own preferences and changes in lifestyle.

"I think it has been crucial for the success of the study that the doctors have been reluctant to begin medical treatment. In that way, the patients have had the opportunity to experience how much their own efforts such as changes in their food habits, more exercise and weight loss affect their diabetes treatment," says Niels de Fine Olivarius.

Thus, almost a third of the [diabetes patients](#) were able to manage their blood sugar purely by changing their [food habits](#), even 6 years after the diagnosis, and thereby the results also show how important it is with intense care immediately after the patient has been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes.

Individual needs

The results have just recently been published in the scientific journal *Diabetologia*. They show that patients who have received individual care with continuous follow-up have significantly lowered their risk of complications, even though they have not received more medicine than those patients who have received the routine treatment.

At the Research Unit for General Practice the director and professor Susanne Reventlow sees "Diabetic care in general Practice" as a pioneer study regarding new treatment methods for general practice. As an example the results show that it is important to take individual needs into consideration when treating patients who suffer from more than one disease.

More information: link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00125-013-2893-1

Provided by University of Copenhagen

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