

Polycystic ovary syndrome tied to risk of type 2 diabetes, independent of BMI

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Women with polycystic ovary syndrome are at increased risk for type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM), and this risk appears to be independent of body mass index (BMI), a new study finds. The results were presented Saturday at ICE/ENDO 2014, the joint meeting of the International Society of Endocrinology and the Endocrine Society in Chicago.

The large group of [young women](#) in the study with PCOS had a very [high risk](#) of type 2 diabetes, even at a young age, and their risk was independent of obesity, the usual key cause of T2DM.

"Polycystic ovary syndrome (POCS) is a common and complex condition that must now be recognized to have not only reproductive features but also important metabolic features, including a high risk of diabetes at a young age, independent of obesity," said lead study author Helena Jane Teede, MBBS, FRACP, PhD, professor of Women's Health and director of the Monash Centre for Health Research and Implementation of the School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine of Monash University in Clayton, Victoria, Australia.

In the United States, an estimated 5 to 6 million women have PCOS and women with this condition are at high risk for diabetes, infertility, depression and poor quality of life.

"With the dramatic rising prevalence of diabetes in the general population, this work highlights the need for greater awareness, targeted screening and intervention in high-risk groups, including young women

with PCOS. It highlights the need for recognition of PCOS as a metabolic condition with implications beyond the ovary and it supports the current calls for a change in the name of the condition to better reflect the diverse health consequences," Professor Teede said.

To examine the prevalence of T2DM and the impact of obesity in reproductive-aged women with and without PCOS, Professor Teede and her colleagues studied a large longitudinal, community-based cohort of young women and analyzed longitudinal data from the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health (ALSWH).

From Australia's national [health](#) insurance database, the researchers randomly selected 6,384 women who lived in the community and asked them to self-report whether they had PCOS and T2DM. The women, ranging in age from 34 to 37 years, were younger than the age recommended for diabetes screening and were in their reproductive years, when undetected diabetes in pregnancy may lead to poor outcomes for mothers and their babies.

The researchers found that type 2 [diabetes](#) was roughly 5 times more prevalent among the women with PCOS than among those without PCOS. Overall, 8.8% (561 women) had PCOS, and 3.8% of this 8.8% had T2DM. By contrast, among the [women](#) who did not have PCOS, only 0.8% had T2DM. This high risk of T2DM in PCOS was independent of obesity.

Provided by The Endocrine Society

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