

# Diabetes may raise risk for dangerous staph infection

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(HealthDay)—People with diabetes may be significantly more likely to

develop potentially deadly "staph" blood infections than those without diabetes, a new study suggests.

As the Danish researchers explained, *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria live on the skin and are normally harmless. However, the germs can cause dangerous infections if they enter the bloodstream.

In fact, the 30-day death rate from such infections is 20 percent to 30 percent, according to the research team from Aalborg University Hospital and Aarhus University Hospital.

In their new study, the researchers tracked the medical records of 30,000 people in Denmark over 12 years.

Overall, they found that people with any form of diabetes were almost three times more likely to acquire a staph blood [infection](#) outside of a hospital, compared to those without diabetes.

The risk jumped to more than seven times higher among people with type 1 diabetes, and almost three times higher for those with type 2 diabetes.

About 95 percent of people with diabetes have the type 2 form of the disease, which is often (but not always) linked to obesity and involves a dysfunction in the body's ability to use insulin. About 5 percent of diabetes is type 1, where the body has lost its ability to produce insulin, the hormone that converts blood sugar to energy for cells.

The new study also found that the combination of diabetes and related kidney problems boosted the odds for staph blood infection by more than fourfold, compared to people without these conditions. People with other diabetes-linked complications, such as heart and circulation problems and diabetic ulcers, were also at increased risk.

The study was published March 10 in the *European Journal of Endocrinology*.

"It has long been a common clinical belief that diabetes increases the risk of *S. aureus* infection, but until now this has been supported by scant evidence," study author Jesper Smit said in a journal news release.

His team also found that the risk of staph bloodstream infection rose with the number of years a person had diabetes. Poor control of diabetes was another factor that upped the infection risk.

The findings suggest that long-term diabetes patients may require closer monitoring for infections, Smit's team said.

"Poor management of diabetes can lead to an impaired immune response," he explained. "This may be the reason why [diabetes](#) patients are at higher risk of infection. Similarly, diabetic patients often suffer associated illnesses—the burden of multiple health care problems can also increase susceptibility to infection."

**More information:** The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [staph infections](#).

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