

Researchers question value of web-based test for prediabetes

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(HealthDay)—A simple, seven-question test for prediabetes may be

needlessly sending millions of healthy Americans to their physicians for follow-up testing, according to a research letter published online Oct. 3 in *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

The online prediabetes assessment asks people to rate their risk based on seven questions, including a person's age, gender, [family history](#) of diabetes, activity level, and weight. People who score 5 or more on the test are deemed likely to have prediabetes or a [high risk](#) for type 2 diabetes. Individuals in the high-risk category are urged to talk to their doctor. The researchers, whose work involves assessing the benefits and harms of different health interventions, calculated the prediabetes risk in the U.S. population using nationally representative health data.

Using the web-based questionnaire, the researchers found that 73.3 million people would be at high risk for prediabetes. That's 58.7 percent of adults 40 and older, and 80.8 percent of adults over 60 years old, the study authors said.

Rita Redberg, M.D., a cardiologist at the University of California, San Francisco, School of Medicine, and editor-in-chief of *JAMA Internal Medicine*, said the study demonstrates how indicators of health—in this case, [blood glucose levels](#) and other risk factors such as weight—are being morphed into their own medical condition. "We suggest a better approach to preventing the epidemic of obesity and its multiple health-related complications is emphasis on healthful diet, weight loss when appropriate, and increased physical activity," she said in an editorial accompanying the study.

More information: [Full Text Editorial \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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