COVID-19 and Diabetes

International Diabetes Foundation Article Review

Class

Name

July 20, 2021
"COVID-19 and Diabetes" is an article published by the International Diabetes Foundation. It was last updated in February of 2021. This article is published on the website without a noted author. The author of this article provides a beginner's overview of the relationship between the COVID-19 coronavirus and diabetes. This overview explores important topics on the relationship between the two illnesses, why it is important to pay attention to and gives suggestions for specific, healthy lifestyle changes for COVID-19 prevention that are individualized to people living with diabetes. This article also provides other resources, including a video and links to partner organizations, to provide more information on the link between COVID-19 and diabetes. This article begins with a bolded statement that draws attention to a critical statement: "COVID-19 is a new and potentially serious coronavirus". The first part of this article discusses coronaviruses in general and does not mention COVID-19 until further down. Coronaviruses have been in existence far before the COVID-19 virus. While the COVID-19 virus has recently increased public awareness and research of coronaviruses, they have been studied by scientists for many years. The article defines a coronavirus as a virus that has been "transmitted from animals to people". The author then discusses other illnesses similar coronaviruses can cause, including Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS).

Following the introduction, this article discusses basic signs and symptoms associated with coronaviruses. These include some milder symptoms, including "a fever, cough, tiredness, or muscle aches," in less severe cases. However, coronaviruses can also lead to more serious symptoms, including an infection in the lungs called pneumonia, kidney failure, difficulty breathing, and other serious symptoms. In some cases, these serious symptoms can result in death. The author also discusses the onset of symptoms, which generally occur with 3 to 7 days of exposure to the virus but could also be anywhere up to 14 days for symptoms to appear in some patients.

The next segment of this article talks specifically about the transmission of COVID-19 and who is affected by the virus. People of all ages can be affected by the COVID-19 cases, yet about 80% of cases are generally considered to be mild. A mild case of COVID-19 presents as general flu-like symptoms or symptoms that some people describe as a common cold. Except in special circumstances, most of these individuals will not require hospital care and can manage their illness at home until it runs its course. However, the International Diabetes Federation stresses in this article that "in up to 15% of cases COVID-19 have been severe" while about "5% of cases have led to critical illnesses".
The author of this article also talks about the way that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted, meaning its respiratory nature. This means that the virus is spread through air droplets dispersed when someone with the virus talks, coughs, or sneezes. This article also provides information about how long the virus could live in the air or on surfaces. This necessitates the need for common COVID-19 advice such as increased hand hygiene protocols and social distancing practices, as they limit close contact to prevent transmission of the virus.

Following this overview of the COVID-19 virus basics, the International Diabetes Federation then shifts its focus in this article to talk about at-risk populations and those with pre-existing medical conditions. Pre-existing medical conditions include chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, asthma, and many more. This then concludes the main introduction of the article, as the topic shifts towards the title of "COVID-19 and Diabetes". People with these existing medical conditions are more vulnerable to becoming severely ill by the COVID-19 virus. As such, these people would fall within a high-risk or vulnerable COVID-19 population.

Diabetes can cause several changes, including highs and lows, in a person's blood glucose level. When a person with diabetes gets the COVID-19 virus, their blood glucose level can fluctuate, ultimately making the virus harder to treat. The author then goes into more depth about the two reasons diabetes makes the COVID-19 virus more difficult for the body to fight or treat. First, an individual with diabetes generally will have a compromised immune system. A compromised immune system means that their body must work harder to fight off the coronavirus. Not only will their body have to work harder to fight the virus, but it will also require more rest and a potentially longer recovery period. The second reason diabetes makes COVID-19 more difficult to treat is that diabetes is a disease of elevated blood glucose. Elevated blood glucose levels may cause the virus to thrive, which is not positive in treating the virus. This article clearly states that the International Diabetes Federation supports the use of the COVID-19 vaccination for people "living with diabetes and other health conditions and advises people living with diabetes to get themselves vaccinated at the earliest opportunity offered to them."

The article shifts its focus to the precautions that people with diabetes should take to protect themselves against COVID-19. These are in line with general recommendations for increased sanitation and hygiene protocols but are noted to be "doubly important for people living with diabetes and anyone in close contact with people living with diabetes." A few of the basic protocols discussed include avoiding frequent face touching, covering your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, avoiding contact with anyone showing symptoms, increased cleaning, and other similar prevention measures.
There is also a list given that discusses specific diabetes measures, like making sure you have adequate diabetes supplies if you need to quarantine yourself and pay extra attention to good blood glucose regulation and daily symptoms.

One other component to this article is a section titled "healthy nutrition and home-based exercise." Here, the International Diabetes Federation discusses how a proper, well-rounded diet and exercise routine is essential for the management of diabetes. Eating a healthy diet can help keep blood sugars more regulated and increase the immune system, which can help as a COVID-19 prevention measure. This includes eating many fruits and green, leafy vegetables, limiting sugar and processed carbohydrate intake, and eating low glycemic index foods. Overall, this article provides an introductory guide to learn COVID-19 basics and how they relate to diabetes. The author provides COVID-19 basics, including symptoms, transmission, and basic prevention measures and protocols. The layout of the information is concise yet effective and efficient. However, this article does not provide detailed scientific information or in-depth information for readers looking to understand why people with diabetes are at increased risk for more severe COVID-19. This article is a great place to start for readers looking for an easy-to-read starting point without complex scientific jargon that can confuse certain people. It should be noted that this article does not discuss the origins of the COVID-19 virus or give detailed diabetes information.

Furthermore, this article briefly mentions that the International Diabetes Federation recommends COVID-19 vaccinations for these individuals without supporting evidence or research. There is no additional COVID-19 vaccination mentioned in this article. In conclusion, this article is a great overview for readers to learn some introductory information about COVID-19 and Diabetes and provides limited information regarding the connection between the two disease states.
References


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