

Survey Snapshot

More than 84 million people in the U.S.¹ have diabetes or are on the verge of getting it;² 90% of them have type 2 diabetes (T2D).³ In many cases, T2D can be managed or even avoided with lifestyle changes like weight loss and exercise. Unfortunately, many people with T2D struggle to find the motivation needed to make these changes. As a result, they are experiencing life-altering complications such as heart attack, stroke, blindness, limb amputation and kidney failure at alarming rates.³

Results of a Recent Diabetes Survey Demonstrate...

Complications are Prevalent: More than 40% (44%) of physicians surveyed say that over half of their patients develop at least one complication as a result of uncontrolled T2D.⁴

Kidney is Key: Nearly all physicians surveyed (94%)⁴ believe kidney health is an important consideration in understanding the risk of other complications.⁴ However, 40% do not believe the majority of their newly diagnosed patients even know that T2D can lead to kidney disease.⁴

Motivation Matters: Physicians report that “lack of motivation”, “lack of adherence to medication”, and “inability to lose weight” are the most common reasons their T2D patients are not effectively controlled.⁴ “Compliance with lifestyle modifications”, “compliance with medication” and “patient understanding” are the top-reported obstacles to preventing complications.⁴

Obesity is Huge, Despite Access to Nutritionist: While 66% of physicians report that they typically refer their T2D patients to a dietitian/nutritionist⁴ and 63% report that dietitians/nutritionists are most helpful in assisting patients with weight loss⁴, T2D patients continue to suffer from high rates of obesity.⁵

Team Approach Underutilized: Eight of 10 physicians (83%) surveyed believe a team of specialists to help patients in the early stages of T2D may help improve patient outcomes.⁴ Seven out of 10 (71%) even say this team approach is feasible for their practice;⁴ yet, 9 out of 10 (93%) don't think their peers are using it.⁴

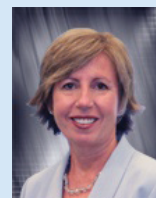
Survey Background

A multi-disciplinary steering committee was convened in November 2009 by Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc. to gain a better understanding of common obstacles faced by physicians when treating their T2D patients (e.g., lack of patient motivation, compliance with treatment plan). Experts concur that these obstacles need immediate attention because they can result in life-altering complications like blindness, kidney failure, stroke, heart disease and limb amputation.³

With the goal of identifying ways to overcome the most prevalent obstacles, a physician survey was conducted among family medicine physicians (FM) and endocrinologists (Endo). In particular, the survey tested the idea that an integrated, team approach utilizing a range of specialists (e.g., nephrologist, cardiologist, diabetes educator, dietitian) early in the course of T2D may help prevent or delay the onset of serious complications and help patients achieve better outcomes.

A team approach has been used over the last decade in some diabetes care centers across the nation. Diabetes organizations like the American Diabetes Association⁶ and American Association of Diabetes Educators⁷ have also supported it. However, its value to patients in terms of preventing complications has not been demonstrated and warrants further exploration.

The Steering Committee



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Methodology

A total of 303 physicians (203 family medicine physicians, 100 endocrinologists)⁴ were polled online via Sermo, the largest U.S. physician-only online community where over 110,000 practicing physicians⁴ collaborate on cases and exchange observations and information. Physicians polled treated an average of 47 T2D⁴ patients per week and have been practicing for an average of 19 years.⁴

The growing diabetes epidemic is a well-documented national concern and a major priority in today's healthcare environment.

Over 27 million Americans currently have diabetes, but a quarter have not been diagnosed and may not even know they have it.¹

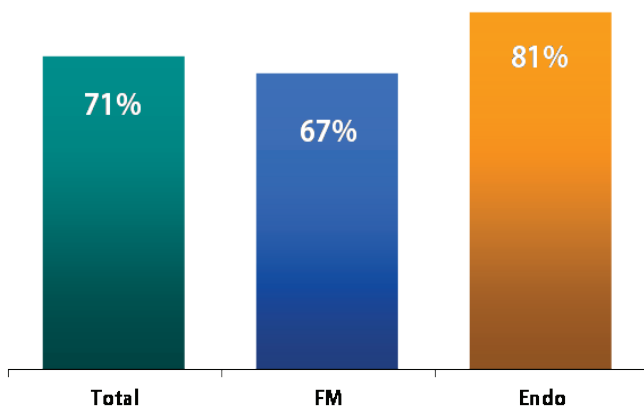


"Minority populations such as African Americans and Hispanics are at greater risk for developing T2D⁸ and in some cases can be less motivated to make needed lifestyle changes like losing weight and exercising," said Deborah S. Fillman, President of AADE and steering committee member.

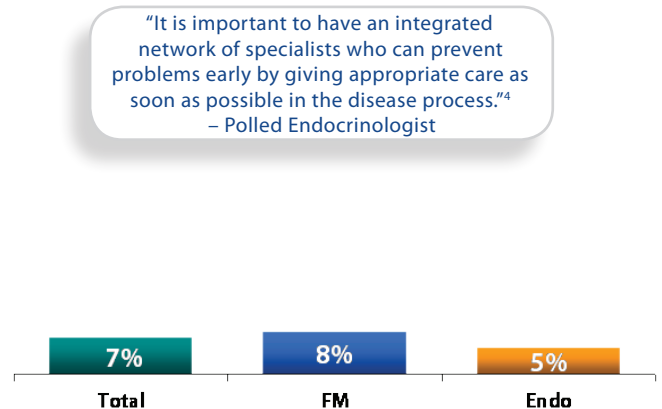
Source: Getty Images

Discussion Points

1. Strategies to reduce T2D-related complications must be created if the burden of T2D is to be lessened. For instance, although the direct costs of diabetes rose 24 percent between 2002 and 2007, the complication costs increased by 141 percent.^{9,10}
2. More patient-physician dialogue around kidney health is important because the kidney may be an independent predictor of other T2D-related complications like heart disease.¹¹
3. African Americans and Hispanics are twice as likely to develop T2D than White Americans of a similar age.¹² Educational programs directed at these populations are necessary for reducing the T2D burden.
4. People with T2D and the physicians/specialists who treat them would benefit from utilizing an integrated, team approach in the early stages of T2D, as it may prevent or delay the onset of devastating complications such as kidney failure, stroke, heart attack, blindness and limb amputation.³
5. People with T2D and the physicians/specialists who treat them would benefit from a clear, practical action plan aimed at keeping patients motivated while making the necessary lifestyle changes that are an integral part of T2D treatment.



71% of physicians say that using an integrated approach in the early stages of T2D treatment is feasible for their practice.⁴



Yet only 7% of physicians believe the majority of their peers use this approach.⁴

"It is important to have an integrated network of specialists who can prevent problems early by giving appropriate care as soon as possible in the disease process."⁴
– Polled Endocrinologist

To speak with a member of the steering committee or to obtain the complete survey results please contact Ann Wainright at 203-791-6318 or ann.wainright@boehringer-ingelheim.com.

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