



Oral Steroids Trigger 2% of All New Cases of Diabetes

Researchers in the December issue of Diabetes Care, found that the use of oral steroids can be a precipitating factor in some cases of new-onset diabetes

Lead investigator Dr. Martin C. Gulliford stated that, the study results "suggest that use of orally administered glucocorticoids may be associated with up to 2% of all new cases of diabetes in primary care."

Dr. Gulliford and colleagues at King's College London School of Medicine note that frequency of atopic disease is increasing, as is the burden of diabetes.

To examine whether there might be a relationship between steroid therapy for atopic conditions and new-onset diabetes, the researchers used a family practice database to conduct a case-control study. In all, 2647 patients with newly diagnosed diabetes were identified and compared with 5294 matched controls.

The researchers found that the adjusted odds ratio for diabetes associated with 3 or more prescriptions for oral glucocorticoids was 1.36. Such patients appeared to account for about 2% of incident cases of diabetes.

However, "there appears to be either minimal or no association of new diabetes with prescribing of glucocorticoid-containing inhalers, topical preparations, eye drops, or infrequent glucocorticoid injections for joint problems," Dr. Gulliford concluded.

Diabetes Care 2006;29:2728-2729.

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Due to Cost Issues 42% of Medicare Enrollees are Non-Compliant with Their Meds: Prior to

implementation of the Medicare drug benefit, they found that in a national sample of 13 835 noninstitutionalized Medicare enrollees, 29% of the disabled and 13% of the elderly beneficiaries reported cost-related medication nonadherence; those in fair to poor health with multiple comorbidities and without coverage were most at risk. Among the disabled enrollees with 4 or more morbidities, 52% without drug coverage skipped prescriptions or doses compared with 26% with Medicaid drug coverage. Those with partial drug coverage through Medigap policies or Medicare health maintenance organizations reported intermediate rates of cost-related medication nonadherence. The rate of nonadherence to medications among the elderly and disabled, because of their cost, is alarming. When there is lack of improvement to therapy, nonadherence should be considered as a possible reason. Arch Intern _____

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