

A link between antidepressants and type 2 diabetes

While analyzing data from Saskatchewan health databases, Lauren Brown, researcher with the U of A's School of Public Health, found people with a history of depression had a 30 per cent increased risk of type 2 Diabetes.

Brown then studied the medical history of 2,400 people who were diagnosed with depression and were taking antidepressants to determine whether there was a clear correlation between that disease and type 2 Diabetes.

Brown divided the group into four categories: those who took antidepressants that were considered older therapies, patients who were using newer treatments, those using a combination of both an old and new treatments and people who were switching medications.

What she found was the risk of diabetes almost doubled for the patients who were using two types of therapies at the same time, tricyclic antidepressants (TCAs) and selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs). Brown says people are usually prescribed multiple medications "if they have severe depression or if they are having a problem finding the right therapy."

Brown believes these results, and results of previous studies demonstrating an increased risk of type 2 diabetes in people with depression, emphasize the need for regular screening for type 2 diabetes in people with depression, particularly those taking more than one antidepressant. She also encourages diabetes and depression organizations to educate their members about this link.

Source: University of Alberta

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