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International  
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International Diabetes Federation

## A high number of people have CVD, but do not know it<sup>☆</sup>



Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of death in people with type 2 diabetes (T2D), and yet, people with type 2 diabetes are unaware of the condition and most alarmingly, don't even know they live with it.

It is well known that people with T2D have an increased risk of developing cardiovascular diseases and associated clinical complications such as peripheral arterial disease, stroke, and heart failure. Given the important relationship between diabetes and CVD, examining CVD awareness and knowledge in people living with T2D is crucial, as it can help to reduce CVD-related morbidity and mortality in people with diabetes.

To investigate global CVD awareness and knowledge, the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) initiated the Taking Diabetes to Heart (TD2H) study in 2017 in collaboration with Novo Nordisk.

The study, consisting of an online survey, was conducted between September 2017 and May 2018. Responses were received from 12,695 people with T2D in over 130 countries. Findings showed that about 10% of respondents did not know about CVD and its associated risk factors. Surprisingly, about one-third considered themselves at no risk or low risk of CVD, while the majority reported that they had at least one CVD risk factor and had experienced one or more CVD events.

A large number of respondents indicated they rely on their healthcare providers and diabetes clinics to obtain information about CVD, and the majority were satisfied with the quality of the information that they received. However, one in six

(17%) respondents reported that they have never discussed T2D and CVD with their healthcare providers. Even among those who had a conversation with their healthcare providers, only a small proportion had it “at the time” or “soon after” T2DM diagnosis (25% and 13%, respectively).

In addition, respondents indicated that they need information about diabetes self-management, the importance of diet and exercise for preventing CVD, as well as general information about signs and symptoms of CVD to better understand the association between T2D and CVD. The findings highlight the important role of healthcare providers in regards to CVD knowledge among people living with T2D, as well as a need for education strategies to increase this knowledge.

By translating these findings, IDF aims to inform policy-makers and healthcare providers about CVD awareness/knowledge among people living with T2DM and provide evidence-based recommendations/guidelines to improve the quality of care and consequently quality of life in this population.

A comprehensive report with global, regional and national findings is available from [www.idf.org/takingdiabetes2heart](http://www.idf.org/takingdiabetes2heart).

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**Taking  
diabetes  
to heart**

Global survey on CVD awareness and knowledge among people with type 2 diabetes

