New insights into the incidence of diabetes in children in France

The review published by Claire Lévy-Marchal et al. [1] and Claire Lévy-Marchal [2] offers a new look at the incidence of type 1 diabetes in French children. These data have been established using a French registry covering the 15% of the population under 20 years of age. Although this registry was closed in 1997 due to a lack of funding, between 1988 and 1997, it is found that the annual incidence rate had increased from 7.4/100,000 to 9.5/100,000. This annual increase (3.7%) was confirmed by a hospital-based survey carried out in Aquitaine in 2004. The younger age group (0–4 years) showed the largest rate of increase (4.8% per annum during the 1990s).

In Europe, thanks to the Eurodiab registry, the incidence of the disease was recorded between 1989 and 1998. Data revealed a wide variation across the continent. Yet, taken as a whole, the increase in the rate of incidence of type 1 diabetes was similar to that in France—about 3% each year—and mostly involved children in the youngest age groups.

These data raise several questions and propose new challenges for research. This rapidly increasing rate suggests the possible influence of environmental factors, such as diet, viral infections, vaccination and hygiene-related issues. This is a very hot topic as, up till now, there has been no interventional trial that has successfully halted the development of the disease.

A further study by N. Tubiana-Ruffi et al. [3] addressing the incidence of type 2 diabetes in the children has confirmed the increasing incidence of this type of diabetes in France. For the moment, this incidence remains low but, considering the growing incidence of obesity in children, the clinical characteristics of both types of diabetes need to become well known by the medical community.

References


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