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11% OF INDIA'S POPULATION IS DIABETIC WHILE 15.3% COULD BE PRE-DIABETIC, SAYS STUDY

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Around 15.4% of the urban population and 15.2% of rural India are in the pre-diabetic stage. Image for representation purpose only. | Photo Credit: AP

An estimated 101.3 million people in the country could be diabetic and another 136 million in the pre-diabetic stage, a cross-section study, carried out between 2008 amd 2020 across the country, has found.

According to the current estimate, about 11% of the country's population is already diabetic with urban India accounting for 16.4% while in the rural population the prevalence is 8.9%.

Around 15.4% of the urban population and 15.2% of rural India are in the pre-diabetic stage. The overall prevalence is 15.3%.

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The estimation is based on an analysis of the prevalence of general obesity; abdominal obesity; hypertension and hypercholestrolemia (presence of bad cholesterol), all of which were found to be higher among the urban population as compared to the rural population.

"It is a ticking time bomb," said R.M. Anjana, managing director of Dr. Mohan's Diabetes Specialities Centre.

A random sampling of the population in all the 31 States found that Uttar Pradesh had the lowest prevalence of diabetes at 4% while Goa had the highest at 26.4%. It is followed by Puducherry with 26.3%; Kerala with 25.5% and Chandigarh with 20.4%. In Tamil Nadu, the prevalence is 14.4%.

"Not all of them would become diabetic. A third of them could reverse their condition to normal but another third will progress and become diabetic," said V. Mohan, chairman, MDRF.

The diabetologist said the study results would be shared with the respective State government so that they can make policies to improve the health of the population. Dr. Mohan said the study results were not a surprise but the numbers that came up were higher than their estimation so

far.

Since 1972, there has been no ICMR study on the prevalence of diabetes in the country. At that time, the prevalence in urban India was 2.3% and in rural India it was 1.5%. The ICMR-INDAB study had been launched in 2008 to estimate the country's NCD burden.

The study was done in five phases between 2008 and 2020 across the country, with each phase covering five States (all seven northeastern States were covered in one phase). Individuals aged over 20 were recruited for the door-to-door survey and 1.24 lakh individuals were part of the survey.

In each State, approximately 4,000 people were chosen (2,800 in rural and 1,200 in urban).

The report, Metabolic non-communicable disease health report of India: the ICMR-INDAB national cross-sectional study (ICMR-INDAB-17), was published in the June edition of Lancet Diabetes Endocrinology released on Thursday.

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