

**EMBARGOED UNTIL JUNE 25, 2021 at 11:30 a.m. ET**

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## **UNMANAGED DIABETES ASSOCIATED WITH GREATER COVID-19 SEVERITY**

*Study shows diabetes patients not taking medication experienced longer hospitalization and recovery with greatest toll among Latinx populations*

**WASHINGTON, DC (June 25, 2021)** – A new study reveals unmanaged diabetes is a key factor in COVID-19 severity and complications, particularly among Hispanic and Latinx populations. Findings of the retrospective study were presented at the virtual 81<sup>st</sup> Scientific Sessions of the American Diabetes Association® (ADA).

[Forty percent](#) of Americans who have died of COVID-19 have had diabetes, and [1 in 10 people](#) with diabetes hospitalized for COVID-19 die within one week – making diabetes a high-risk comorbidity. When left untreated, diabetes can lead to increased overall health complication. Yet, [nearly 1 in 5](#) Americans with diabetes report that due to the increased financial constraints of the pandemic they had to choose between buying food or buying medications and medical supplies required to manage their diabetes.

The study sought to determine the impact of unmanaged diabetes, or a lack of medication use, on COVID-19 severity and recovery within in a predominately Hispanic population (89%) — a population [2.4 times](#) more likely to die of COVID-19 and [50% more likely](#) to have diabetes than white Americans.

The retrospective study was conducted by a multidisciplinary team lead by Dr. Sudip Bajpeyi, Director of the [MiNER laboratory](#), at the University of the Texas at El Paso and was presented by his master’s student Ali Mossayebi. This study used medical records from 369 patients admitted to the University Medical Center, El Paso, TX with COVID-19. Patients were categorized based on A1C levels into normoglycemic (N: A1C <5.7%), prediabetes (Pre: A1c 5.7% ≤ 6.5%) and diabetes mellitus (DM: A1C ≥ 6.5%) groups. The DM group was further categorized for their self-reported diabetes management with medication at the time of the admission.

Findings show patients with unmanaged diabetes had significantly greater severity of COVID-19 based on quick sepsis-related organ failure assessment (qSOFA) and length of hospitalization compared to patients who managed diabetes with medication. Moreover, patients with lower blood sugar (blood glucose) levels had less severe complications and shorter hospital stays. “Our results highlight the importance of

assessing, monitoring, and controlling blood glucose in hospitalized COVID-19 patients from the start, specifically for vulnerable populations already at risk of comorbidities.” said Sudip Bajpeyi, PhD, University of Texas at El Paso and lead author of the study.

### Research presentation details:

- [Unmanaged Diabetes as a Poor Prognostic Factor in the Severity of Infection and Recovery Time of Hospitalized COVID-19 Patients](#)
- Date: Friday, June 25, at 11:30 a.m. ET
- Ali Mossayebi and Dr. Bajpeyi will be providing an overview of the study findings and will be available for virtual media interviews on June 25 from 12:30–1:30 p.m. ET.
  - If interested in speaking with Mr. Mossayebi and Dr. Bajpeyi, register [here](#).

For more information or to request an interview, please contact the ADA Scientific Sessions media team at [SciSessionsPress@diabetes.org](mailto:SciSessionsPress@diabetes.org).

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### About the ADA’s Scientific Sessions

The ADA’s 81<sup>st</sup> Scientific Sessions, the world’s largest scientific meeting focused on diabetes research, prevention, and care will be held virtually June 25–29. Leading physicians, scientists, and health care professionals from around the world will unveil cutting-edge research, treatment recommendations, and advances toward a cure for diabetes. Though the conference will be remote this year, attendees will receive exclusive access to nearly 2,000 original research presentations and take part in provocative and engaging exchanges with leading diabetes experts. Learn more and register at [scientificsessions.diabetes.org](https://scientificsessions.diabetes.org) and join the Scientific Sessions conversation on social media using #ADA2021.

### About the American Diabetes Association

Every day, more than 4,000 people are newly diagnosed with diabetes in America. More than 122 million Americans have diabetes or prediabetes and are striving to manage their lives while living with the condition. The ADA is the nation’s leading voluntary health organization fighting to bend the curve on the diabetes epidemic and help people living with diabetes thrive. For 80 years, the ADA has been driving discovery and research to treat, manage, and prevent diabetes while working relentlessly for a cure. We help people with diabetes thrive by fighting for their rights and developing programs, advocacy, and education designed to improve their quality of life. Diabetes has brought us together, what we do next will make us Connected for Life. To learn more or to get involved, visit us at [diabetes.org](https://diabetes.org) or call 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383). Join the



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