

# Alarming diabetes rate revealed

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ONE Australian adult over 25 develops diabetes every five minutes, the latest Australian Diabetes, Obesity and Lifestyle Study (AusDiab) shows.

The 12-year follow-up, the second in the AusDiab study of 11,000 Australians, found that in line with smokers, people with diabetes have a 40% increased risk of mortality compared to people without diabetes.

The data showed just how much of a burden diabetes places on the healthcare system, with 30% of patients with diabetes seeing their GP three or more times in three months, compared with 16% of people without diabetes.

Around 12% of patients with diabetes spent two or more nights in hospital, compared with 6% of people without diabetes.

However, the proportion of people meeting LDL cholesterol targets increased from 21% at the start of the study in 2000, to 73% in 2012.

## AusDiab stats

- Depression was 80% more prevalent in those who were obese
- Diabetes incidence was twice as high in the most socially disadvantaged area
- The mortality rate in people with diabetes was between four and five times that of people with normal glucose tolerance

But the proportion meeting blood pressure and HbA<sub>1c</sub> targets had slightly decreased since 2004.

AusDiab co-chief investigator Professor Jonathan Shaw, associate director of Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute, said the use of cholesterol-lowering agents had nearly doubled over the study.

“That’s clearly an important and valuable thing. [But] I think

it’s hard not to conclude that while we’ve clearly done very well in lipid-lowering, we’ve got a long way to go in HbA<sub>1c</sub> and blood pressure,” he said.

Weight increased most in the youngest age groups – 6.7kg in those aged 25–34, and 4.7kg in those aged 35–44, compared with a fall of 2.1kg in those aged 65–74.

“We tend to think of the issues of obesity being mainly in relation

to diseases that come in middle age. But if you want to have an impact on obesity, the people to target are in fact the young adults,” Professor Shaw said.

Patients estimated their moderate to vigorous physical activity at 50 minutes per day, but accelerometer-assessed activity was in fact found to be 37 minutes per day for men and 27 minutes per day for women.

