

EVALUATION OF DIABETIC FOOT COMPLICATIONS IN OPD PATIENTS AT DIFFERENT HOSPITALS OF DISTRICT NAUSHAHRO FEROZE

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Abstract

Diabetic foot is a global epidemic of 21st century and it is a major health problem. Foot complications in patients with Diabetes mellitus (DM) are a major health problem and account for 20% annual Diabetes related hospital admissions. This study was made in order to evaluate Diabetic foot complications in outdoor patients (OPD) at different hospitals from district Naushahro Feroze Sindh. This cross-sectional descriptive study was carried out from June to November 2021. It aims to find out the prevalence and causes of foot complications in type I and type II Diabetes mellitus patients and to find out the commonest complication in the area. The data was collected from the predesigned proforma and frequency, percentage, mean were analyzed and calculated statistically. During research period total 74 patients of type I and type II Diabetes mellitus patients were evaluated for Diabetic foot complications. Male to female ratio was 1.3:1. The ratio of type I and type II DM was 1:6.4. The commonest age group of patients was between 31- 45 years. 44 (59.4%) patients were educated (hardly five to seven or eight class). (40.54%) patients were uneducated. In our study most common foot complication was foot ulcer/ wound infection (33.7%). Second most common complication was diabetic foot gangrene (27.03%). Other foot complications were peripheral neuropathy (24.32%), foot abscess (10.81%) and cellulitis (4.05%). 35 patients (47.2%) came with history of hereditary (genetics) and 39 (52.7%) patients had history of acquired disease. People educated/uneducated in District Naushahro feroze are unaware of DM and its complications Therefore public (patients) awareness about DM, foot complications and foot care is strongly needed in District Naushahro feroze Sindh.

INTRODUCTION

Diabetes mellitus is defined as a clinical condition that occurs either due to lack of insulin secretion or decreased sensitivity of the tissues to insulin. It is a disease in which carbohydrate, fat, and protein metabolism is impaired [1, 2]. The basic etiology of the disease is either genetic or environmental factors and the incidence is increased in Asia and Europe due to sedentary lifestyle, altered dietary habits, and aging

population [3]. According to the latest edition of the Diabetes Atlas, an estimated 366 million people are affected throughout the world [4, 8]. There are about 60 million patients in Europe. Hyperglycemia kills more than 3.4 million patients annually. 80% of these deaths occur in underdeveloped countries. According to a WHO report, the number of deaths will double between 2005- 2030 [5]. International Diabetes

Federation reports that in 2015 about 415 million people were affected globally by the disease and this number may cross 640 million in 2040 [6]. More than 60% of the world's Diabetic population resides in Asian countries [7]. Diabetes mellitus is a global epidemic of the 21st century and it is a major health problem. The health record of the past three decades shows that Diabetes mellitus is increasing and probably it will continue to increase in the coming decades [9, 10, 15]. Diabetes mellitus may affect any system of the body causing various complications; some of the complications are life-threatening and adversely affect the quality of life (QoL) [11]. Foot complications in patients with Diabetes mellitus are a major public health problem and accounts for 20% of the annual Diabetes-related hospital admissions [12, 13]. Diabetes foot complications are the major cause of morbidity and mortality in patients with Diabetes mellitus [14]. The foot complications that can occur are foot ulcer, wound infection, abscess formation, infection of the foot's deeper tissues e.g., necrotizing fasciitis (deep wound infection), cellulitis, and wet or dry gangrene [11]. Diabetes foot ulcer (DFU) is the most common and most important complication of Diabetes mellitus and if left untreated it will lead to wound infection, gangrene, ultimately amputation of the affected part [15,16]. The main reason for foot ulceration is either neuropathy or peripheral arterial disease. Infection of foot ulcerations plays an aggressive role in causing superficial or deep wound infection, gangrene, or amputation [17]. A Diabetic patient has an up to 25% risk of developing a foot ulcer [18]. Diabetes mellitus is the mother of all diseases affecting different systems of the body e.g., cardio-vascular system, nervous system, skin, eyes, urogenital system, etc. The main culprit for its complications is hyperglycaemia, therefore control of hyperglycemia is essential to avoid complications of Diabetes mellitus [19, 20]. Early recognition of high foot risk and urgent treatment will save the patient from different types of lower limb amputations and disability [21].

Foot with complications in Diabetic patients is called a Diabetic foot [10, 22]. Diabetic foot complications can occur at any age but are more common in patients above 65 years old and it is a big economical threat [23]. The number of Diabetic foot patients is increasing globally which leads to an increased

incidence of foot complications [24]. Therefore, foot disease is a common and most dangerous complication of type 1 and type 2 Diabetes mellitus [25, 26] and it is a major cause of morbidity and mortality in Diabetic patients [27, 32]. According to one estimation, one of every 30 patients with Diabetes Mellitus suffers from lower limb amputation [28]. Diabetic foot is also called Diabetic foot syndrome (DFS) and it is one of the most important complications of Diabetes mellitus [29, 33]. Diabetic foot complications are responsible for approximately 50% of all Diabetic related hospital admissions [30] and 15% of the 200million Diabetic patients throughout the world [31]. Diabetic foot complications no doubt are a challenge for the health care system and an economic burden for the patient and his family because complications follow longer duration and their treatment is expensive [34].

PATIENTS AND METHOD:

- i.Study included 74 patients of type I and type II diabetic patients with diabetic foot complications.
- ii.Cases were collected from different hospitals (non-teaching) of district Naushahro Feroze.
- iii.Case study was done under the direct supervision / guidance of senior surgeon (masters in surgery) Taluka hospital Moro.
- iv.All patients were registered after taking consent for study.
- v.Fortnightly tour program was scheduled to visit different health facilities (hospitals) centers of the district.
- vi.Concerned health facility doctor was requested to collect study cases on the scheduled date.
- vii.In diabetic patients, foot problems other than diabetes mellitus e.g.: Traumatic foot injury, electric burn, surgical wound infections etc. were excluded from the study.
- viii.Study depends mainly on patient history, clinical examination, necessary investigations like blood sugar, serum creatinine and in selected cases Doppler study for peripheral vascular flow / supply etc.
- ix.A proforma was filled up for each patient.
- x.Ordinary instruments like stethoscope, BP apparatus, thermometer, hammer, proforma etc. were needed.

RESULTS:

In my research project, there were 10 (13.3%) patients of type I DM and 64 (86.5%) patients of type II DM. Type I to type II DM ratio was 1:6.4 (Table: 1).

There were 42 (56.7%) male patients and 32 (43.3%) female patients. The male to female ratio was 1.3:1 (Table: 2).

The age distribution showed that 4 patients were between 15-30 years of age (3 male and 1 female), 34 patients were between 31-45 years of age (15 male and 12 female), 9 patients were between 46-60 years of age (3 male and 6 female patients) (Table: 3).

The mean age of male patients was 47.11 and female patients were 49.8 years (Table: 4).

Ten patients were thin build (6 male and 4 female patients), 54 patients were that of moderate build (32 male and 22 female patients), 10 patients were obese build (4 male and 6 female) (Table: 5).

30 (40.5%) patients were from urban population and 44 (59.5%) patients were from rural population (Table: 6).

44 (59.4%) were educated patients (34 “80.9%” male and 10 “31.25%” were female patients). 30 (40.54%) were uneducated patients (8 “19.04” male and 22 “68.75%” were female patients) (Table: 7).

18 (24.32%) patients presented with peripheral neuropathy, 25 (33.7%) patients presented with DFU/wound infection, 20 (27.03) patients presented with foot gangrene, 8 (10.81%) were cases of foot abscess, and 3 (4.05%) patients presented with cellulitis of foot and leg. (Table: 8).

35 (47.2%) patients came with family history of DM (hereditary) and 39 (52.7%) had acquired disease. (Table: 9).

Table 1: Showing distribution of patients according to type of Diabetes Mellitus (DM) (n=74)

TYPES	NO: OF PATIENTS	%AGE
TYPE I	10	13.5
TYPE II	64	86.5
TOTAL	74	100

TYPE I TO TYPE II RATIO = 1:6.4

Table 2: Distribution of patients according to sex /gender (N=74)

SEX	NO: OF PATIENTS	%AGE
MALE	42	56.7
FEMALE	32	43.3
TOTAL	74	100

MALE TO FEMALE RATIO 1.3:1

Table 3: Age Distribution of male/female patients (N=74)

AGE (YEARS)	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
15-30	3	1	4
31-45	21	13	34
46-60	15	12	27
61-75	3	6	9
TOTAL	42	32	74

Table 4: Mean age (years) of patients
(N=74)

SEX	MEAN AGE (YEARS)
MALE	47.11
FEMALE	49.8

Table 5: Distribution of patients according to build
(n=74)

BUILD	MALE	FEMALE
THIN	6	4
MODERATE	32	22
OBESE	4	6
TOTAL	42	32

Table 6: Distribution of patients according to urban/rural
(n=74)

URBAN/RURAL	No: OF PATIENTS	%AGE
URBAN	30	40.5
RURAL	44	59.5
TOTAL	74	100

Table 7: Distribution of patients according to Educated/uneducated
(N=74)

SEX	EDUCATED	UNEDUCATED	TOTAL
MALE	34 (80.9%)	8 (19.04%)	42
FEMALE	10 (31.25)	22 (68.75)	32

Table 8: Distribution of patients according to Diabetic foot complications
(N=74)

COMPLICATIONS	NO: OF PATIENTS	%AGE
PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY	18	24.32
DUF/WOUND INFECTION	25	33.7
GANGRENE	20	27.7
ABSCCESS	8	10.81
CELLUTITIS	3	4.05
TOTAL	74	100

Table 9: Distribution of patients according to hereditary

HEREDITARY/ACQUIRED DISEASE	NO: OF PATIENTS	%AGE
HEREDITARY	35	47.3
ACQUIRED	39	52.7
TOTAL	74	100

DISCUSSION:

Diabetic foot complications are the most common complications of DM, especially diabetic foot wound

infection and gangrene are the deadliest complications leading to limb amputation and disability [35, 36,49]

The present study was carried out in district Naushahro Feroze (Sindh) to evaluate diabetic foot complications and their causes (etiology). 74 patients of DM I and DM II were collected from outpatient departments (OPD) of different hospitals (non-teaching) of district Naushahro Feroze. Our study was important due to the fact that such type of research work is still negligible in districts of interior Sindh. The total no: of patients DM I was 10 (13.5%) and DM II patients were 64 (86.5%). Our study agrees with the observations of Abdul Fatai B Olokoba et al and another study by Alistair D McInnes who claims that number of patients of DM II is more as compared to DM I and is increasing globally [37,38]. Sex distribution showed that the total no: of male patients was more (56.7%) as compared to female patients (43.3%) and the male to female ratio was 1.3:1. V Jyothylekshmy et al also have reported that Diabetic foot complications are more prevalent in male patients as compared to female patients [45]. In present study Diabetic foot complications are more common in 31-45 years age group and next common group is 46-60 years age. Mean age of male patients was 47.11 and that of female was 49.8 years. This contradicts study report of V Jyothylekshmy et al [45]. In our study Diabetic foot complications are more prevalent in rural population (59.5%) as compared to urban population (40.5%). In present study male patients were more educated (80.9%) as compared to female patients (31.25%). In our study the most common foot complication was DFU/wound infection (33.7%), the next common complication was diabetic foot gangrene (27.03%), the 3rd commonest foot complication was peripheral neuropathy (24.32%), abscess (10.81%) and cellulitis (4.05%) were least common complication.

In our study majority of patients had acquired disease (52.7%) as compared to history of hereditary disease (47.2%). In this study after taking proper history and clinical examination of study cases our observation is that there is excessive use of potato, rice, sugar in the form of tea, soft drinks sweets etc. is common in rural and urban population. Such type of diet may promote hyperglycemia. Most of the patients belonging to higher economic groups e.g., landlords, merchants, shopkeepers and officers spend sedentary (physical inactivity) life. In our study DFU/ wound infection and foot gangrene are most prevalent foot

complications in areas of district Naushahro feroze, which is matter of worry due to their grave consequences if left untreated. Diabetic foot infections (DFIs) can cause superficial or deep wound infections, gangrene, prolonged hospitalization and limb amputation [46, 48]. Our study agrees with the results of Pengzi Zhang Jin Lu et al study who reports DFU/wound infection prevalence is higher in male patients and in DM II patients [55]. David G. Armstrong et al claim that about one-third of half a billion people with DM globally develop DFU/wound infection during their lifetime and half of DFUs will develop foot infection and 17% of patients will need limb amputation due to DFU [44].

Our study agrees with the results of David G. Armstrong et al study reports that DFU/wound infection are a common and serious cause of morbidity and mortality in DM patients [40,41,42]. Ilkey Uckay et al study predicts as there is an increase in the incidence of DM and a longer lifespan of DM patients ultimately will lead to an increase in DFIs [47]. Our study agrees with the results of Pengzi Zhang Jin Lu et al study who reports DFU/wound infection prevalence is higher in male patients and in DM II patients [55]. Benjamin A. Lipsky et al reports that Diabetic foot infections (DFIs) commonly develop in neuropathic DFU [50]. Patients with DM are more prone to DFIs due to neuropathy, vascular insufficiency, and decrease neutrophil cells function [51]. A recent report estimated that the risk of hospitalization and lower extremity amputation is 155 times greater for patients with DFI [52]. DFIs if it causes osteomyelitis, it is also a serious complication [53]. Recently a prospective observational study reports that healing incidence in infected DFUs is 44.5% cases in one year [49]. Our study agrees with the results of Chanjuan Lu et al study who reports that early detection of diabetic foot complications and their predisposing factors is essential to avoid serious foot complications like DFIs and amputations [43]. Kristin S. Reid et al also suggest for early detection and prevention of foot complications [54]. In the present study, our observations are that the best treatment of DFIs is prevention, timely treatment (medical/surgical) of complications if it occurs. Prevention needs public/patient's awareness about DM and its complications, foot care, change in lifestyle especially of DM patients which consists,

avoiding food items that increase blood sugar level, routine exercise, etc. Prevention programs also include training of general practitioners (G.P) in DM and arrangement for concerned consultants (physicians and surgeons) and full facility arrangement of medical/ surgical treatment including medicine at nearby health facility and arrangement for public awareness at government level.

CONCLUSION:

Diabetes mellitus (DM) is a major public health problem globally. Its complications especially diabetic foot complications are more common in diabetic patients. In present study which was conducted from district Naushahro feroze, it is concluded that the type II diabetes mellitus is more common as compared to type I. The study depends on 74 cases. Male were more suffered from DM and foot complications than female (out of 74 patients, 44 patients were male and 32 female patients were infected).The commonest foot complications were DFU/wound infection and gangrene. The causes of these infections are: patients usually are very careless about their infections or disease, self-treatment by using different herbs and leaves of plants or trees, mostly patients use ill-fitting shoes or walking bare feet, patients are very careless about their hygienic condition, lack of knowledge about DM and its complications, lack of awareness, poverty and deliberate delay in referral by general practitioner (G.P), sedentary lifestyle of higher economic class, excessive use of potatoes, rice, sugar (common in Rural/urban population) are probably important causes of Hyperglycemia/DM and its complications especially foot complications. Public awareness is strongly recommended in district Naushahro Feroze.

SUGGESTIONS & FUTURE DIRECTIONS:

- The golden rule prevention is better than cure is still true in the management of diabetic foot complications.
- Prevention and treatment of diabetic foot must follow international standards.
- Prevention includes following:
 - i.Public awareness on government level for diabetes and its complications especially foot complications which includes:

- a. Arrangement of seminars / training programs for local doctors and paramedic staff so that they know about DM and its complications and help in early diagnosis of foot complications and refer to consultant.
- b. Posting of specialists / consultants of different specialty e.g., general surgeon, orthopedic surgeon, physician specially trained in DM, podologist (foot specialist), physiotherapist etc.
- c. Provide full laboratory (lab) facility in governmental hospitals.
- d. Medicine required must be available.
- e. Arrangement of seminars for public awareness about DM.
- ii. Patient should be trained in:
 - a. Foot care (daily assessment of their feet).
 - b. Improve personal hygiene.
 - c. Control hyperglycemia.
 - d. Must have sufficient knowledge about DM and its complications specially foot complications.
 - e. Avoid ill-fitting shoes.
 - f. Avoid walking bare feet.

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