

**ORIGINAL PAPER**

**Diabetic Patients are often Sub-Optimally Aware about their Disease and its Treatment**

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**Abstract**

**Background:** Diabetes mellitus (DM) represents a continuously growing worldwide threat with major financial impact on the healthcare systems. The importance of tight glycaemic control in patients with DM type II is well established and is most effectively accomplished with the proper cooperation of both the treating physicians as well as the treated subjects.

**Aims:** The aim of our study was to evaluate the level of awareness of patients with DM type II about the various aspects of DM, including the nature of the disease, its precipitating factors and complications, as well as its treatment.

**Methodology:** The patients were asked to complete anonymously a questionnaire concerning their knowledge about diabetes, its basic pathophysiology and complications, the treatment options and possible side-effects. Data were analyzed using STATA statistical software (Version 9.0).

**Results:** Eighty patients were on oral hypoglycaemic agents (OHA), 34 on insulin while 4 were under a hybrid treatment. Among patients on OHA, 40 patients (50%) were taking a combination of them. 13,4% of the sample was aware of what DM stands for, 84,9% did not know the type of DM they were suffering from, while (85,7%) considered that obesity plays a major role in the pathogenesis of DM. Concerning the therapy of DM, only 54,83% of the patients were aware of the brand names of their antidiabetic medication, 88,2% did not know their way of action, while 60,5% did not know the possible side effects. The majority of the sample, 60,5%, assumed that blood glucose should be measured only before meals.

**Conclusions:** The knowledge of the subjects visiting the center for the first time was found to be inadequate. This is probably due to inadequate information, non-availability of educational material and improper guidance.

**Key Words:** Education and diabetes mellitus, inadequate knowledge, scale awareness program