

## Dietary habits of diabetics similar to normal people

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Bayer Zydus Pharma, in collaboration with Prof. Dr Shashank Joshi (Padma Shri awardee and president of Association of Physicians of India) and nine other eminent endocrinologists/diabetologists, conducted the STARCH study across five regions in India - North, South, East, West, and Central India. STARCH stands for Study To Assess the dietary CarboHydrate content of Indian type-2 diabetes population. The study was conducted with the objective to assess the total and complex carbohydrate content in the daily diet of the diabetes population.

The study published in the journal BMJ Open shows that the Indian diabetes population consumes higher than recommended carbohydrates in their diet (64.1 percent energy comes from carbohydrates). The study also assessed the blood glucose control in diabetes participants and observed that only 33.1 percent have blood glucose within recommended levels (i.e. HbA1c < 7 percent). Further, there was clear non-adherence (only 38.1 percent) to the diet plan advised by their physician/dietician.

"Diabetes is emerging as a major health issue for India. Through the STARCH study we hope to provide medical professionals valuable insights on the carbohydrate consumption patterns across India and its impact on diabetes management. The STARCH study is our endeavor to improve the life of our patients and is in line with our mission at Bayer Science for a Better Life" said Mr Angel-Michael Evangelista, MD, Bayer Zydus Pharma

According to Dr Shashank Joshi, lead Investigator of the study, "The STARCH study highlights the fact that carbohydrates are consumed widely across India and not only in South of India. This is contrary to the myth that people in the Southern part of the country consume higher carbohydrates in their meals. Even if diabetes participants know that they have diabetes and need to follow certain diet patterns, they do not necessarily adhere to it."

In the diabetes group, the mean percentage of total energy intake from carbohydrates was 64.1 percent, which is much higher than the upper limit of 60 percent as recommended by the National Institute of Nutrition. High carbohydrate

consumption amongst people with diabetes is associated with abnormal blood sugar levels, particularly the post-meal blood sugar levels.

In conclusion to the study results, Dr Joshi says, "As clinicians, we need to ensure that the patients are provided with proper diet counselling with support from a dietician if required."