Higher Chance of Sudden Death by Heart Attack for Patients with Diabetes
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News in Brief: About 700,000 people, or one-tenth of the population, suffer from diabetes in Hong Kong; which means 1 in 10 individuals is diabetic. High levels of blood sugar over a long period of time, together with high blood pressure and high cholesterol may damage blood vessels, thus increasing the risk of coronary heart disease by two to four times. A study showed that individuals with diabetes have a higher chance of sudden cardiac death than non-diabetic individuals. Doctors pointed out that individuals with diabetes may need implantable cardioverter-defibrillator to help reduce the risk of sudden death.

Caption: A study showed that individuals with diabetes have higher chance of sudden cardiac death than non-diabetic.

About 700,000 people, or one-tenth of the population, suffer from diabetes in Hong Kong, which means 1 in 10 individuals is diabetic. High levels of blood sugar over a long period of time, together with high blood pressure and high cholesterol may damage blood vessels, thus increasing the risk of coronary heart disease by two to four times. A study showed that individuals with diabetes have a higher chance of sudden cardiac death than non-diabetics individuals. Doctors pointed out that individuals with diabetes may need implantable cardioverter-defibrillator to help reduce the risk of sudden death.

According to the Department of Health, the number of deaths due to heart disease in Hong Kong was 4,703 in 2001, but the number rose to 6,334 in 2011.
Myocardial infarction is one of the main causes of sudden cardiac death. The risk of sudden cardiac death is incremental yearly for diabetics from 6 percent in the first year to 11 percent in the second year.

1 in 10 is Diabetic in Hong Kong

Coronary heart disease is one of the major factors for the death of diabetics, but diabetes also raise the risk of heart disease. A research was conducted by the Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine at the University of Hong Kong, from January 1998 to January 2005 to find out whether diabetes will trigger sudden cardiac death in individuals with myocardial infarction. The results were published in *Diabetes Care*, an American journal of Medicine, on 8 August 2012.

The study followed up 610 individuals who were hospitalised with myocardial infarction for the first time, and found that 236 (38.7 percent) of them were diabetic (aged 66.2 on average), and 374 (61.3 percent) non-diabetic (aged 64.1 on average). After a follow-up period for an average of five years, there were 23 sudden cardiac deaths (9.7 percent of diabetic) in the former group, and 21 sudden cardiac deaths (5.6 percent of non-diabetic) in the latter. The results indicate that diabetics have a higher chance of sudden cardiac death than the non-diabetics.

Implanted Cardiac Defibrillator Can Reduce Risk of Sudden Death

In a press conference, Dr. David Siu Chung Wah, Clinical Associate Professor of the Cardiology, Department of Medicine at Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine, the University of Hong Kong, and Dr. Yeung Chun Yip, associate consultant of Internal Medicine at Queen Mary Hospital explained the risk of the disease, saying that drugs are commonly used in the treatment of myocardial infarction, but this approach may not be sufficient to prevent sudden cardiac death. The onset of sudden cardiac death is not predictable, and it may cause death within one hour of when symptoms appear. The survival rate is very low as the onset usually takes place outside the hospital. As individuals with myocardial infarction are at high risk of sudden cardiac death, it is recommended that automatic implantable cardiac defibrillator (AICD) be installed in these individuals to prevent sudden cardiac death.

The effectiveness of cardiac defibrillators have been analysed by foreign studies, which found that the risk of sudden death was reduced by 67 percent for patients who use the cardiac defibrillator. The AICD currently in use are equipped with a new type of battery whose lifespan is considerably extended.
when used along with excellent surgical skills and precise adjustments. This helps reduce not only the number of future surgeries, but also the risk of complications.

Remarks:

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