

# press release

## Living with Diabetes During COVID-19 – Canadian T2D Survey Insights

*Survey reveals access to health care teams, treatment option awareness and blood sugar management as biggest challenge during pandemic*

**MISSISSAUGA, ON – September 9, 2020** – The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted diabetes management and understanding of effective resources and treatment options for Canadians living with type 2 diabetes (T2D). A survey of 551 Canadians aged 18 to 80 who have been clinically diagnosed with T2D were asked to comment on their disease during COVID-19. Of those surveyed, 95.3% of Canadians living with T2D are unfamiliar with GLP-1 (glucagon-like peptide-1) receptor agonists, a second-line standard medication option when blood glucose levels are not properly managed with metformin.<sup>1</sup>

GLP-1 is a naturally occurring hormone that plays an important role in maintaining blood glucose levels for T2D patients.<sup>2</sup>

“I encourage our patients to get optimal control of their diabetes. New studies suggest if you have poorly controlled diabetes you could be at greater risk for serious COVID-19 complications compared to well-controlled diabetes,” said Dr. Ronald Goldenberg, epidemiologist at LMC Healthcare in Vaughan, Ontario. “Today, millions of people with diabetes can live full, active lives because of innovative – clinically proven – treatment options in combination with a healthy diet and regular exercise.”

Today, 1 in 3 Canadians (11 million) have diabetes or prediabetes.<sup>3</sup> Ninety per cent of Canadians with diabetes are living with T2D, which is most prevalent in adults, however, the incidence in children has been increasing across Canada.<sup>4</sup> It’s estimated 1.5 million Canadians have T2D and don’t know it.<sup>5</sup>

### Challenges Canadians with T2D manage during COVID-19 – survey highlights:

- **Access to healthcare provider** – 89% of T2D Canadians surveyed found that accessing their health care team was their biggest challenge, followed by eating right (43%), maintaining a healthy lifestyle (33%) and proper self-monitoring (29%).
- **More dialogue is needed between T2D patients and healthcare professionals** – 65% of survey respondents indicated not having recently discussed T2D treatment options with their healthcare provider.
- **Knowledge of alternative treatment options** – 62% of survey respondents would welcome new treatment information and options their healthcare provider deems appropriate.
- **Glycaemic control to support diabetes management** – 26% of T2D survey respondents indicated having recently had challenges in managing their glycaemic control.

### About the T2D Survey

This online survey was funded by Novo Nordisk Canada Inc and completed between May 20 – May 26, 2020 through [Maru/Blue's](#) online consumer panel. 551 Canadians, aged 18 to 80 diagnosed with type 2 diabetes were surveyed with representation from every province. No territories were included. The margin of error is +/- 2.5%, 19 times out of 20.

### About Novo Nordisk

Novo Nordisk is a leading global healthcare company, founded in 1923 and headquartered in Denmark. Our purpose is to drive change to defeat diabetes and other serious chronic diseases such as obesity and rare blood and endocrine disorders. We do so by pioneering scientific breakthroughs, expanding access to our medicines and working to prevent and ultimately cure disease. Novo Nordisk employs about 43,500 people in 80 countries and markets its products in around 170 countries. For more information, visit [novonordisk.ca](http://novonordisk.ca), [Twitter](#), or [YouTube](#).

### Further information

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### References

<sup>1</sup> Diabetes Canada. 2018 Clinical Practice Guidelines. <http://guidelines.diabetes.ca/docs/CPG-2018-full-EN.pdf> Accessed July 2020.

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<sup>2</sup> Kim W, Egan JM. The role of incretins in glucose homeostasis and diabetes treatment. *Pharmacol Rev.* 2008;60:470-512

<sup>3</sup> Diabetes Canada. Diabetes 360: A Framework for a Diabetes Strategy for Canada. <https://www.diabetes.ca/DiabetesCanadaWebsite/media/Advocacy-and-Policy/Diabetes-360-Recommendations.pdf> Accessed August 2020.

<sup>4</sup> Diabetes Canada. Diabetes 360: A Framework for a Diabetes Strategy for Canada. <https://www.diabetes.ca/DiabetesCanadaWebsite/media/Advocacy-and-Policy/Diabetes-360-Recommendations.pdf> Accessed August 2020.

<sup>5</sup> Diabetes Canada. Diabetes 360: A Framework for a Diabetes Strategy for Canada. <https://www.diabetes.ca/DiabetesCanadaWebsite/media/Advocacy-and-Policy/Diabetes-360-Recommendations.pdf> Accessed August 2020.