

Challenges of diabetes management during COVID-19 infection

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BACKGROUND:

- **Diabetic patients** are more susceptible to **severe forms** of COVID-19 infection. They also may have poor glycemic control due to infection and corticosteroids.
- We aimed to describe the frequency of diabetes and its management in patients with COVID-19 infection.

PATIENTS AND METHODS:

- A **retrospective study**, including COVID-19 patients
- In the department of infectious diseases in Hedi Chaker hospital
- Between November 2020 and February 2021.

RESULTS:

- In total, **351 patients** were collected.
- **The prevalence of diabetes** (Figure 1)

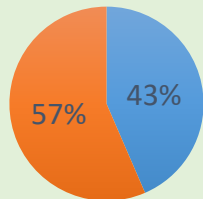


Fig1: Prevalence of diabetes

■ Diabetics ■ Non diabetics

- Diabetes was **type 2** in 94.1% of cases.
- Patients were without any treatment (29%), treated with oral antidiabetic drugs (52.3%) or treated with insulin (38%).

- Degenerative complications: 22.2 % of patients.
- **For diabetic patients:**
 - **Severe clinical forms:** 75.2%.
 - **Treatment:** Corticosteroids on 91.5 %. (*Between 4 mg (10.5%) and 24 mg (29.4%) of dexamethasone*).
 - **A poor glycemic control** : 72.5 %, treated with insulin in all cases.
- **Regarding non-diabetic patients (198 patients):**
 - 14.2% of patients developed diabetes.
 - For these patients, dexamethasone was prescribed at *a posology over 12 mg in 60.7% of cases*.
 - **The average duration of corticosteroids:** 9 days.
 - All patients were discharged with oral antidiabetics.

CONCLUSION:

- People with diabetes should be educated regarding the management of their condition during COVID-19 infection, including medication changes.
- If neglected, it may result in increased morbidity and mortality.