Editorial Article

Diabetes mellitus in the Arab world

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It has been a pleasure in overseeing the compilation of this special issue on diabetes for the journal with articles being submitted from Nigeria to Malaysia and of course locally from KSA and Qatar. Alhamdullilah, we believe that this special issue provides a timely insight into the many facets of diabetes. We have combined reviews and original observations as well as brief communications to highlight the extensive manifestations of diabetes. More importantly the reviews were deliberately commissioned to provide an update on different aspects of diabetes specifically for the MENA region. The authors were given a clear direction to identify the current burden of disease related to their area and to provide a road map for clinicians and academics as well as governmental organizations to help them to navigate a way forward to address the pandemic of diabetes mellitus and its complications.

Naweed Al Zaman addresses the fundamental problem of diabetes in relation to obesity in the Arab World. Mirghani et al. emphasize the consequences of unrecognized diabetes and cardiovascular disease by demonstrating a high prevalence of ventricular arrhythmias and reduced ejection fraction in not only patients with known diabetes, but also those with newly discovered diabetes admitted to the CCU in Tabuk, KSA. To address this Al-Nozha and colleagues provide a detailed literature review on the diagnosis and management of coronary artery disease in patients with diabetes in the Middle East. Guraya and London have undertaken a detailed literature review on the prevalence, diagnosis and management of peripheral vascular disease in the MENA region. Masliza Mohd Ali and colleagues show the utility of retinal screening in Kelantan Malaysia and identify raised HbA1c and LDL as well as the presence of peripheral neuropathy and nephropathy as risk factors for patients presenting with proliferative diabetic retinopathy. Petropoulos et al. provide a detailed overview of the prevalence and treatment of diabetic painful neuropathy and diabetic neuropathy in the MENA region. Mohammed al Hariri provides a brief but important insight into the often overlooked but common complication of diabetic otopathy.

Bassem Y Sheikh provides a unique and scientific insight into the role of prophetic medicine through the administration of black cumin, olive, Miswak, honey, dates and Zamzam water in the management of diabetes. This sits alongside an update by Mohamed Alahdramy who reviews the role of conventional oral hypoglycaemic agents in the management of diabetes, many of which are of course derived from plants. Indeed Stephen Owa and colleagues from Nigeria show that a local lime concentrate preparation called Aporo and seeds of Mucuna pruriens have glucose lowering properties which are equivalent to Glibenclamide. Waghulde and Naik from Jalgaon, India have undertaken detailed evaluation of novel microsphere technology to enhance the duration of action of drugs, paving the way for once daily and perhaps once weekly drugs in the management of diabetes.

However, we must not forget that Almadinah Almunawarah city has the highest reported incidence of Type 1 diabetes in the MENA region. The cause for this is not established, therefore Ahmed al-Hakami and colleagues provide some insight by showing no association between exposure to human cytomegalovirus and Type 1 diabetes in Abha. Ashoor et al. provide a case report and review on islet cell transplantation for the treatment of Type 1 diabetes.

Medicus curat, Natura sanat morbus.
The physician heals, Nature makes well.

Aristotle

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