

Epidemiology of Diabetic Foot Infection in India

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INTRODUCTION

Diabetes mellitus remains a chronic, major, serious metabolic disease affecting nearly 537 million individuals globally, which constitutes around 11% of the population worldwide¹. The numbers have also increased substantially in India, affecting 101 million people with diabetes, as stated in a recent study by the Indian Council of Medical Research—India Diabetes (ICMR-INDIAB).² Diabetic foot infections (DFI) remain one of the most common complications of diabetes, which is associated with a significant increase in the rates of morbidity and mortality and also poses a huge challenge due to its increased healthcare expenditure.

EPIDEMIOLOGY OF DFI WORLDWIDE

The lifetime risk for developing DFI was between 19 and 34%, according to a study by Armstrong et al., due to the increase in the assessed life expectancy,³ and it is also alarming to understand that every twenty seconds, a leg is being amputated somewhere in the world.⁴ DFI remains the principal cause of lower extremity amputation (LEA), and 85% of them were preceded by DFI.⁵ It has been predicted that an individual with DFI is at a 2.5 times higher risk of 5 years of mortality than a person without the ulcer.⁶ This puts a substantial economic burden on society as well as the nation, as it has been estimated that 33% of all the expenditure spent on diabetes is found to be related to DFI.⁷ The overall prevalence of diabetic foot ulcers (DFU) is 6.3% globally.⁷ The incidence of amputations has also increased by almost 50% in some regions across the globe, especially among younger individuals with diabetes.⁸ It has also been estimated that around 20% of those