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## Awareness of diabetic retinopathy among patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus in Jordan

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**Abstract:** Background: Increasing the level of awareness of diabetic retinopathy among individuals with type 2 diabetes mellitus is considered an important factor for early diagnosis and management of diabetic retinopathy. The aim of this study was to evaluate awareness of diabetic retinopathy among a sample of type 2 diabetes mellitus patients in Jordan. Methods: The study period was from August to December 2015. The sample was selected randomly from patients who have type 2 diabetes mellitus from the general population in three main cities in Jordan (Amman, Irbid, Zarqa). A questionnaire was distributed to 237 participants with diabetes to assess their awareness and knowledge of diabetes and diabetic retinopathy. The questionnaire included questions to assess awareness about diabetic retinopathy, sources of knowledge about the disease, and patients' knowledge and compliance with available treatments and routine eye examinations. Barriers that may interfere with early eye examination were also questioned. Results: A total of 237 participants (107 (45.1%) females and 130 (54.9%) males) with type 2 diabetes were interviewed. Mean age  $\pm$  standard deviation for the study population was 54.51  $\pm$  10.28 years. Of the study population, 88.2% were aware that diabetes can affect the eyes and 81% reported that diabetic retinopathy can lead to blindness. Higher levels of patients' awareness of diabetic retinopathy were related to higher level of formal education ( $p < 0.05$ ). The main source of information about diabetic retinopathy as reported by 47.3% patients was general practitioners. Patients' compliance with diabetes management was relatively high, however, their compliance with routine retinal assessment was poor with only a total of 29.5% of participants having had an eye examination in the previous year. Conclusions: Awareness of the nature and consequences of diabetic retinopathy among patients with diabetes in Jordan is relatively high. However, patients' motivation to undergo