

New study shows increased risk for diabetic patients after shoulder replacement

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New research analyzes the association of preoperative blood sugar levels with an increased risk of wound complications and deep infection



Singapore- More than 16 million people in the United States are affected by diabetes, a metabolic condition resulting in high blood sugar levels. A new research article published in the June 1, 2018 issue of the *Journal of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (JAAOS)*, examines how levels of hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c), affects the risk for postoperative wound complications and deep infection after shoulder replacement in patients with diabetes. HbA1c levels reflect the control of blood sugar.

"While diabetes has been strongly associated with an increased risk of wound complications and postoperative infection after total hip and knee arthroplasty, it has not been routinely associated with higher rates of infection after shoulder replacement," says lead study author and resident orthopaedic surgeon Jourdan M. Cancienne, MD. "With the number of shoulder replacements in patients with diabetes expected to increase, as well as the costly consequences of wound complications and infection, it is of high clinical significance to determine if these patients are at an increased risk for infectious complications postoperatively."

According to the research article, there were several limitations to this study, including the use of HbA1c levels as an indicator of blood sugar measurement, as these tests could be inaccurate in patients with other conditions affecting the blood. Additionally, the study used a large administrative database, which relies on the quality of the data and accuracy of the coding entered.