Psychological insulin resistance and psychosocial factors in Hong Kong primary care patients

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Introduction
Patients with diabetes mellitus (DM) often delay insulin initiation and titration due to psychological factors. This phenomenon was termed psychological insulin resistance (PIR).

Objectives
to examine the relationship between PIR and psychosocial factors, especially depression; furthermore, and to examine the prevalence of PIR.

Methodology
402 DM patients from a Government funded general outpatient clinic completed the questionnaire. Patients' demographic were retrieved and they were interviewed for the patient health questionnaire (PHQ-9) and ITAS questionnaire. Relationship between ITAS scores, PHQ-9 scores and patients' demographic data were analyzed.

Result
There was no relationship found between presence of depression and presence of PIR. PIR prevalence was 47.2% in insulin-naïve patients; in contrast to only 8.7% in current insulin users. Tools such as ITAS may help clinicians to understand patients' reasons of PIR, which is likely multifactorial according to current study. Factors such as starting insulin treatment, having relative(s) on insulin, higher education, being a male, and doctor's advice within 6 months were associated with lower PIR.