

Diabetic foot syndrome



Field of action 3: Reducing the complications of diabetes

Adults

Background

Diabetes can lead to the development of diabetic foot syndrome. Risk factors include poly-neuropathy, occlusive peripheral arterial disease or a combination of both. These can lead to injuries and/or wounds on the feet that go unnoticed and which are characteristic of diabetic foot syndrome [1]. Amputation may be necessary if conservative treatment of infection is insufficient.

Key facts

- ▶ 6.2% of adults with diabetes have had a documented diabetic foot syndrome in 2013.
- ▶ Since 2011, it has been mandatory for doctors to document diabetic foot syndrome when prescribing podiatric treatments which may have contributed to an increase in documentation.

Figure 1: Temporal comparison of the prevalence of documented diabetic foot syndrome among adults with diabetes covered by statutory health insurance in % by sex between 2012 and 2013 (age-standardised).

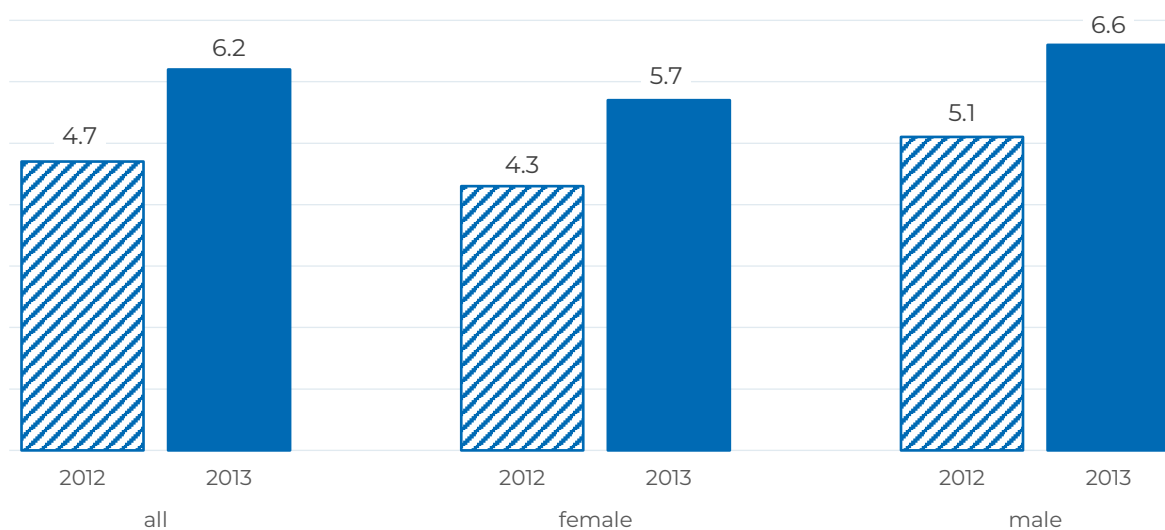
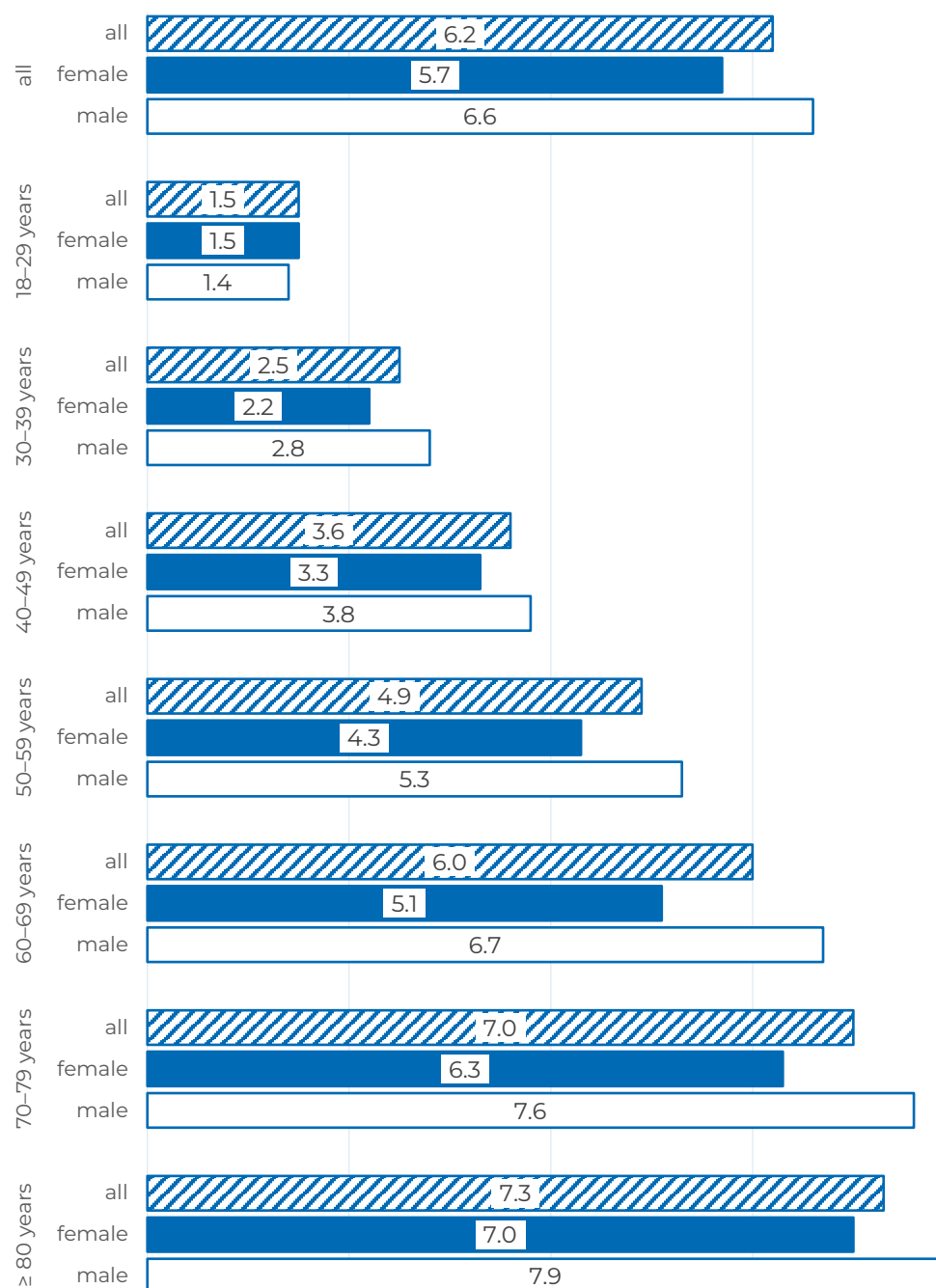


Figure 2: Prevalence of documented diabetic foot syndrome among adults with diabetes covered by statutory health insurance in % by age and sex in 2013.



Results

In 2013, 6.2% of adults with diabetes had documented diabetic foot syndrome (women: 5.7%; men: 6.6%). This figure increases with age and peaks at 7.3% in the 80-plus age group (women: 7.0%; men: 7.9%).

Conclusion

As is the case with diabetic polyneuropathy, varying documentation and diagnosis standards make it difficult to compare data sources. Disease-Management-Programs (DMP) data on type 2 diabetes in North Rhine-Westphalia put the proportion of patients with diabetic foot syndrome slightly higher. Once again, variance is most apparent in the older age groups [2]. Other studies report prevalences of between 2% and 10% [3-5]. Since 2011, it has been mandatory for doctors to document diabetic foot syndrome when prescribing podiatric treatments [6]. This may have contributed to an increase in documentation, a trend which can also be observed from DMP data [7].

Methodology and data sources

Definition

The indicator diabetic foot syndrome is defined as the proportion of persons with diabetes with documented diabetic foot syndrome (E10.74-14.74 / E10.75-14.75).

Reference population

Adults are included in the analysis if they have statutory health insurance and documented diabetes (in accordance with the definition of the indicator “prevalence of documented diabetes”), have been insured for at least 360 days in the respective year, reside in Germany and have their health benefits fully reimbursed by the statutory health insurance.

Data source

Claims data from approximately all of the 70 million people with statutory health insurance collected in accordance with the Data Transparency Ordinance (DaTraV data). Around 55 million are at least 18 years old, of which around 6.6 million have documented diabetes.

Calculation

- ▶ **Observed relative values:** The quotient of the number of people with documented diabetes and documented diabetic foot syndrome in relation to the population with statutory health insurance and documented diabetes.
- ▶ **Observed absolute values:** Number of persons covered by statutory health insurance with documented diabetes and documented diabetic foot syndrome.
- ▶ **Age standardisation:** Direct age standardisation used 18- to 24-year-olds as one age group, five-year age groups for the ages 25 to 29 until 80 to 84, and then a separate group for the ages 85 and over. The DaTraV population with documented diabetes in 2013 was used as the reference population.

Data quality

Data Transparency Ordinance (DaTraV) data are claims data on all people covered by Statutory Health Insurance (SHI). DaTraV data include documented outpatient and inpatient diagnoses as well as information on prescribed medications. The quality of claims data from SHI depends on conduct of documentation. DaTraV data do not cover people insured by private health insurance and do not provide information on inpatient or outpatient care.

Data download

Robert Koch Institute. (2024). Results of the National Diabetes Surveillance 2015 – 2024 [Data set]. Zenodo. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14935276> (in German)

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External links

- ▶ Federal Institute for Drugs and Medical Devices (BfArM). Information on the SHI health data by the health data lab. [cited 19.02.2025]. Available from: <https://www.healthdatalab.de/data>.
- ▶ Reitzle L, Schmidt C, Du Y, Icks A, Hagen B, Ziese T, et al. [Estimating prevalent microvascular complications of diabetes mellitus in Germany. Analysis of statutory health insurance data in 2012 and 2013]. Bundesgesundheitsbl. 2020;63(10):1219-30. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00103-020-03211-x>.

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