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Obesity, Diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease in Migrant South Asians

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ABSTRACT South Asians are at increased risk for type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Although life-style changes, including increased caloric intake and decreased physical activity, appear to significantly contribute to the heightened disease risk of migrant South Asians, genetic susceptibility appears to be particularly important in this population. More specifically, genetic susceptibility to insulin resistance and other non-traditional risk factors may play a major mechanistic role in predisposition to both diabetes and cardiovascular disease in migrant South Asians. Therefore, the understanding of the interactions between life-style, obesity and genetic variables in the pathogenesis of insulin resistance is of importance in defining parameters of intervention for disease prevention in this population. In this review we discuss pathogenesis of non-traditional risk factors in migrant South Asians. We also discuss recent findings from clinical trials to prevent type 2 diabetes in various populations, and identifiable criteria for screening and intervention for risk reduction in migrant South Asians.

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