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循環器疾患等生活習慣病対策総合研究事業

糖尿病における血管合併症の発症予防と進展抑制に関する研究

（Japan Diabetes Complications Study; JDCS）

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(Japan Diabetes Complications Study; JDCS)

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研究要旨

Japan Diabetes Complications Study (JDCS)は、日本の糖尿病患者の現況や診療の状況、治療の有効性、病態的特徴、生活習慣介入の効果などを検討することにより、糖尿病およびその血管合併症を抑制するためのエビデンスを確立し、患者の生命予後と QOL の改善に貢献することを目的としている。全体を２群に割り付け、比較的緩徐な生活習慣指導を中心とした強化治療がコントロール指標や合併症に及ぼす影響も検討しつつ、コホート全体の前向き観察疫学的研究としても位置づけている。開始されたのは平成 8 年で、北海道から九州までの全国 59 施設において 2205 症例を登録し、現在開始後 10 年に達した。欧米人糖尿病患者を対象にした類似研究と比較すると、日本人患者は肥満が顕著でないことや、血糖コントロールの経時的増悪が認められないことなどを始め多くの違いが認められた。また日本人患者における各種糖尿病合併症の発症頻度とリスクファクターも明らかになりつつある。たとえば糖尿病網膜症と心血管合併症のリスクファクターに共通性があること、ミクロアルブミン尿のリスクはその量によって大きく異なること、現行のメタボリックシンドローム診断基準は日本人２型糖尿病患者の心血管合併症予測には必ずしも有用でないこと、日本人糖尿病患者におけるアルコール摂取の大血管合併症発症に及ぼす影響が欧米人患者とは異なること、などの興味深い知見も多数得られた。これらの臨床エビデンスは、今後の診療にそのまま活かせるものである。さらに今回の研究により整備されたコホートとデータベースは、今後長期間にわたり様々な追加研究に用いることができる貴重なものであり、欧米以外で初めての２型糖尿病患者を対象にした介入研究として、末永くわが国の糖尿病治療・対策に貢献し続けるものと期待される。

A．研究目的

戦後の生活習慣の急速な変化、とりわけ食事の欧米化と交通の整備に伴う身体活動量の減少は、急激な2型糖尿病患者数の増大をもたらした。平成14年度に厚生労働省から発表された糖尿病実態調査によると、わが国の成人の6.3人に一人が2型糖尿病もしくはその疑いが極めて高いという深刻な事態に陥っている。

この糖尿病患者数の増大は日本のみの現象ではなく、地球的規模とも言えるものであり、糖尿病とその血管合併症（網膜症・腎症・神経障害および大血管合併症すなわち冠動脈疾患と脳血管障害）は、世界の人々の寿命・quality of lifeならびに医療費にきわめて深刻な影響を及ぼしている。これからの本格的な高齢化社会を迎え、生活の質や高騰する医療費との関係においても、2型糖尿病はもっとも重視すべき疾患である。この危機感は、日本のみならず世界で共有されており、国連においても、'Unite for diabetes'を合い言葉に、感染症以外では初めて単独疾患として糖尿病を取り上げて、世界で団結して取り組む姿勢をアピールしている。

これまで糖尿病ならびにその合併症に関する大規模臨床試験は、欧米を中心に実施されてきた。主なものとしては、米国人1型糖尿病を対象にしたDiabetes Control and Complications Trial(DCCT)と、英国人2型糖尿病を対象にした英国のUnited Kingdom Prospective Diabetes Study(UKPDS)が挙げられる。これらの欧米の研究は、糖尿病診療における多くの重要なエビデンスを生み出し、その診療に多大な貢献をした。しかしDCCTは日本には少ない1型糖尿病のみを対象にしたものであり、またUKPDSでは、介入群、非介入群ともに体重の増加、血糖コントロールの長期的悪化がみられ、介入手段としてインスリンや薬物を用いることの問題点も明らかになった。

さらにもっとも重要な問題として、遺伝的背景やライフスタイルが欧米人とは大きく異なる日本人糖尿病患者の診療方針や保健施策決定に、このような欧米のエビデンスを、そのまま適用できるかどうかという点は残る。日本人患者の診療に安心して使える臨床エビデンスを確立するために、日本人患者を対象にした大規模臨床研究によるエビデンスが求められる所以である。

本研究 Japan Diabetes Complications Study (JDCS) では日本全国より多数の症例を登録し、患者教育による生活習慣改善を中心的な介入手段として、前向きに追跡調査を進めてきた。平成7年度の報告書にJDCSの調査実施計画の詳細が記載されているが、そのプロトコールに基づいて平成8年4月より現在まで介入と追跡が継続されてきた。

この日本の糖尿病患者と糖尿病専門医が協力して築き上げた貴重なコホートは今後とも大切にし育てていかなければならず、そこから得られるであろうエビデンスは今後、日本のみならず東アジア諸国を始めとする世界の糖尿病診療に貢献していくことが期待されている。

B．研究方法

JDCSの事務局は、茨城県つくば市にある筑波大学大学院臨床医学系内分泌代謝糖尿病内科におかれ、さらに東京お茶の水にある糖尿病データセンターにおいても、データの収集・解析・事務などの作業が実施されている。登録症例のすべてのデータ

は、散逸を防ぎ質を保証するために、この糖尿病データセンターにおいて一元管理がなされている。

本研究の対象患者は、主治医が積極的に生活習慣改善を中心とした強化治療を行う「介入群」と、通常の外来診療を継続する「非介入群」に割り付けられている。そして両群間で、血糖コントロールや血管合併症などについて差があるかどうかを検討している。介入群の患者には、体重、血糖、血圧、血清脂質、飲酒・喫煙などについて「治療到達目標」が設定されており、主治医も患者もこれを到達するように努力することが求められている。各学会の診療ガイドラインの厳格化にともない、JDCSにおいても、途中、「治療到達目標」が改訂強化された（表１）。

各合併症の診断基準は予めプロトコールで定められており、たとえば網膜症についてはその発症(1次予防)および単純性網膜症の進展(2次予防)、腎症については尿アルブミン 300 mg/24hr 以上の出現とし、それぞれ専門家の判定委員により判定されている。各種データはコンピューターに入力し、統計専門家による解析や効果判定を実施している。

(倫理面への配慮)
本研究は倫理委員会の許可に基づいて進められており、すべての対象者においてインォームドコンセントがなされ、同意書が得られている。従来の欧米の大規模臨床介入試験のように、非介入群をコントロール不良のまま観察することは倫理的配慮から避け、両群において内服薬やインスリンなどの変更は妨げず、非介入群についても治療目標を達成するように、通常の外来管理を継続している。また介入自体も、薬剤やインスリンによる介入と比較して安価で、低血糖などの副作用がないという点でも安全性に優れている。実際に開始後現在までの８年間、特に倫理的な問題を生じた事はなく、順調に進行している。

C．研究結果と考察
本研究のように長期にわたる大規模介入試験では、主治医や患者の移動に伴う登録症例の脱落が起きやすいことがもっとも苦労した点である。将来の日本の糖尿病診療エビデンスを日本人の手で造り上げる、という本研究の趣旨を、専門医の先生方と患者さんの双方がよくご理解の上、大変な努力をしていただいたにも関わらず、10年という歳月の間には、主治医の交代、患者さんの異動などで消息が不明になってしまった患者さんがある程度おられたことは事実で、この種の研究の難しさが実感された。この貴重な経験とノウハウは、今後わが国で行われる類似研究に活かされるものと思われる。

全患者の平均 HbA_{1C} は約 7.6%であり、残念ながら介入群と非介入群との差は統計的有意に達せず、生活習慣介入の難しさを示す結果となった。しかしその背景には、本研究参加施設（すべてが糖尿病診療の専門施設）の通常診療（非介入群に施されている治療）のレベルがもともと高かったこともあるとみられる。また全登録者の平均肥満度(BMI)もまったく増加しておらず、このことはむしろ、欧米の前向き調査結果では見られない本邦の糖尿病患者の特徴と言える。

本研究では、このほかにも欧米とは異なる日本人糖尿病患者の興味深い特徴が数多く捉えられた。たとえば昨年度までの解析では、JDCS 登録患者と UKPDS 登録患者との肥満度とエネルギー摂取量を比較した結果、日本人２型糖尿病患者は、白人患者と比較して平均肥満度は少ないにも関わらず、単位体重あたりのエネルギー摂取

量は逆に多く、過食による肥満以外の要素もかなり大きく影響している可能性が示唆された。このような著明な差の背景として、白人と日本人とのインスリン分泌能やインスリン抵抗性の違いが関与しているものと推測される。

さらに日本人糖尿病患者と欧米人糖尿病患者とのアルコール摂取の影響の違いも興味深い。すなわち欧米人糖尿病患者を対象にした研究のメタアナリシスでは、適度（エタノール換算で一日 38ｇ以下）のアルコール摂取は、冠動脈疾患抑制効果を有することが示されている。しかし JDCS 登録患者ではそのような現象は認められなかった。したがって日本人２型糖尿病患者に対しては、たとえ適量だとしても、飲酒はあまり勧められないことになる。

また、JDCS 登録患者と米国の糖尿病患者では、血圧や脂質の平均値がそれほど違わないにも関わらず、降圧薬・高脂血症薬の使用頻度が極端に違うことも示唆され、日本人と欧米人とで、これらの薬物に対する感受性が異なる可能性も考えられる。このような日本人糖尿病の特徴を抽出していくことは、その病態背景を理解し、日本人糖尿病患者に適した対策を考える上で重要であろう。

長年の追跡の結果として、多くの合併症の発症・進展例が補足されたため、各合併症のリスクファクターの解析の統計的パワーは上がりつつある。前向き研究による日本人患者における細小血管合併症の発症率とリスクファクターのデータは多くないので、これらのデータはその意味でも貴重であり今後のさらなる解析が期待される。

細小血管合併症に関する解析結果としては、網膜症とメタボリック症候群との関連が示唆された。最近の欧米の研究では糖尿病神経障害と心血管リスクファクターとの関連が指摘されていることとあわせて考えると興味深い結果である。腎症に関する解析結果では、収縮期血圧が 140 mmHg 以上の患者の腎症発症のリスクは、130 mmHg 未満の患者の 2.7 倍に上昇していた。また HbA_{1C} 9%以上以上の患者の腎症発症のリスクは、7%未満と比較して 3.3 倍であり、あらためて腎症における血圧と血糖の両方の管理の重要性が浮き彫りになった。

大血管合併症については、わが国では従来より冠動脈疾患より脳血管障害の頻度が多かったにも関わらず、糖尿病患者では、冠動脈疾患の発症率が脳血管障害の発症率を上回っており、言わば欧米型の動脈硬化疾病構造に変化しつつあることが注目される。これらの大血管イベント発症患者を、それぞれエンドポイントに達しなかったものと比較すると、日本人２型糖尿病患者においても、大血管合併症予防には、血糖コントロールと共に脂質や血圧のコントロールも重要であることが判明した。

また介入群に対する強化治療の効果については、脳血管障害の発症が有意に少ないことが明らかになりつつある。この点については、虚血性心疾患を含むその他の合併症や検査指標に両群間差がなかっただけに、その機序に興味が集まる。今後いろいろな側面から詳細に検討される予定である。

D．結論

わが国におけるこれまでの糖尿病に関する無作為割り付け前向き臨床試験の中では最も規模の大きい Japan Diabetes Complications Study (JDCS)を実施した。その中間成績は臨床現場に役立つエビデンスを生み出しつつあり、すでに多くの国際誌で報告され、国際的知名度を高めつつ

ある。

JDCS はわが国の多くの糖尿病専門医・患者ならびに関係者の長年の努力の結晶である。今のところまだ中間データの段階であるが、今後のさらに詳細な解析が行われることにより、日本人（東アジア人）糖尿病のエビデンスを確立することを通じて、わが国の将来の糖尿病診療に大きく貢献することが期待される。

E．健康危険情報

該当事項なし

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表１　強化治療群の新治療目標

下記のすべてを達成するように、主治医による強化治療を実施する。

① HbA_{1c}：　6.5%未満

② BMI：　22 kg/m^2未満

③ 血圧：　130 mmHg 未満／80 mmHg 未満［目標値に達しない場合は、ARB または ACE-I（またはその両方）を用いる］

④ 血清脂質：LDL コレステロール＜100 mg/dl（血清総コレステロール＜180 mg/dl）［目標値に達しない場合は、スーパースタチンの中でも　できるだけピタバスタチン（リバロ™）を用いる］（治療薬剤を統一する必要があるので）

⑤ 可能な限り抗血小板療法

表２　日本および欧米の糖尿病患者におけるアルコール摂取と心血管合併症の関係

	Howard, et al. (2004)	JDCS（/1000人年）（文献3より）	
	冠動脈疾患	冠動脈疾患	脳卒中
飲酒なし	100%	7.3	6.5
38gエタノール(=日本酒1.5合)までの飲酒	45-66%	9.1	7.6
それ以上の飲酒	143%	8.7	12.9*

表３　日本と米国における糖尿病患者の降圧薬・高脂血症薬の使用状況と血圧および血清脂質の状況（平均±標準偏差）（文献２より引用）

	JDCS （登録時）	MGH Revere Health Care Center
患者数［男性の比率%］	2205［55］	128［39］
年齢（歳）	59 ± 7	66 ± 12
HbA_{1C}（%）	7.7 ± 1.4	7.7 ± 1.5
収縮期血圧（mmHg）	132 ± 16	136 ± 18
拡張期血圧（mmHg）	77 ± 10	73 ± 10
総コレステロール（mg/dL）	201 ± 35	180 ± 37
降圧薬服用率　(%)	28	80
高脂血症薬服用率(%)	26	57

別紙４

研究成果の刊行に関する一覧表

雑誌

発表者氏名	論文タイトル名	発表誌名	巻号	ページ	出版年
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Is the Diagnosis of Metabolic Syndrome Useful for Predicting Cardiovascular Disease in Asian Diabetic Patients?

Analysis from the Japan Diabetes Complications Study

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OBJECTIVE — The metabolic syndrome (MetS) is believed to be associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD). Although its prevalence is extremely high among diabetic patients, its prevalence in those with no history of CVD has not been determined. Moreover, prospective studies published on the association between MetS and cardiovascular events in diabetic populations have used only the World Health Organization (WHO) definition of MetS and included only white European subjects. The aim of this study was to determine the prevalence of MetS, as defined by both the WHO and the National Cholesterol Education Program (NCEP), and its predictive value for CVD in Asian diabetic patients in a long-term, prospective setting.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS — The baseline characteristics and incidence/hazard ratio of cardiovascular events (coronary heart disease and stroke) were determined in 1,424 Japanese type 2 diabetic patients with and without MetS, as defined by WHO (WHO-MetS) or the NCEP.

RESULTS — A high prevalence (38–53%, depending on sex and definition) of MetS was found among diabetic patients, even those with no history of CVD. During the 8-year study period, only WHO-MetS was a predictor for CVD in female patients. In male patients, although both definitions of MetS were significant predictors for CVD, individual components of MetS, such as hyperlipidemia or hypertension, were equivalent or better predictors.

CONCLUSIONS — We found that MetS is relatively common in diabetic patients with no history of CVD. We suggest that the commonly used definitions of MetS, at least in their present forms, have limited clinical usefulness for Asian diabetic patients and may need some ethnic group–specific modifications for global use.

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The metabolic syndrome (MetS) is an important cluster of metabolic abnormalities linked with insulin resistance and cardiovascular disease (CVD) (1). The diagnostic criteria of MetS proposed by the World Health Organization (WHO-MetS) (2) and the National Cholesterol Education Program (NCEP-MetS) (3) are currently the most widely used. Although the prevalence of MetS in the general population reportedly differs widely among ethnic groups (4–8) and according to the definition of MetS used (7,9–11), the prevalence among patients with known diabetes is consistently high (70–90%) regardless of ethnicity or definition (12–20). Considering the high prevalence of CVD in the diabetic population (21) and the fact that subjects with a history of CVD often have multiple cardiovascular risk factors, it has been speculated that the extremely high prevalence of MetS among diabetic patients (12–20) may be due to the large number of patients who already have a history of CVD. However, the prevalence of MetS in diabetic patients without CVD has not been widely investigated to date. It is rational to examine this because diabetic patients with MetS have a higher incidence of CVD than those without MetS (15,16) and MetS is a stronger risk factor for CVD in patients with type 2 diabetes than in nondiabetic subjects (12).

Most prospective studies have shown that subjects with MetS are at increased risk of incident CVD (22,23) and mortality due to CVD (9,24–27). However,

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Abbreviations: CHD, coronary heart disease; CVD, cardiovascular disease; ECG, electrocardiogram; HOMA-IR, homeostasis model assessment of insulin resistance; JDCS, Japan Diabetes Complications Study; MetS, metabolic syndrome; NCEP, National Cholesterol Education Program; UKPDS, U.K. Prospective Diabetes Study; WHO, World Health Organization; WHR, waist-to-hip ratio.

A table elsewhere in this issue shows conventional and Système International (SI) units and conversion factors for many substances.

many of these studies excluded diabetic patients from their study populations (9,22–24). Diabetic patients are known to be at greater risk for CVD than nondiabetic subjects (21), and it has been suggested that MetS is responsible for the increased prevalence of coronary heart disease (CHD) seen in diabetic patients (20). Therefore, it is important to evaluate the predictive value of MetS on incident CVD in diabetic patients in long-term, prospective studies. To the best of our knowledge, there have been four cohort studies specifically targeting diabetic patients to determine the relative risk of MetS on the incidence of CVD (12,15,16) and mortality due to CVD (17). Although these studies involved only white European subjects and used only the WHO definition of MetS, most of them (12,15,16) demonstrated, as expected, that the presence of MetS is associated with at least a severalfold increase in the risk of CVD. The above findings notwithstanding, it remains unclear *1*) whether such predictive values of MetS are also applicable to diabetic patients of other ethnicities, *2*) which features of MetS are the best predictors of CVD and should become the critical therapeutic targets for the optimal management of CVD risk in diabetic patients (28), and *3*) whether the commonly used NCEP definition of MetS (3) possesses the same predictive value for CVD as the WHO definition in diabetic patients.

The incidence of CVD in Asian subjects is known to be much less than in white subjects in general (29) and in diabetic populations in particular (30). In addition, the degree of obesity is very different between white and Asian diabetic patients (31,32), and the impact of obesity on CHD risk is known to be entirely different between whites and Asians (33,34). These differences could affect the apparent clinical significance of MetS (35,36), so that it is questionable whether the overall concept of MetS itself and the diagnosis of MetS under the present definitions based on data from mostly European and American patients are applicable to the evaluation of CVD risk in Asian diabetic patients. Therefore, in this long-term, prospective study of Japanese diabetic patients with no history of CVD, we determined the prevalence of MetS and analyzed its individual features and predictive value for incident CVD using the two most widely used definitions of MetS (2,3). Such comparisons are helpful in possibly establishing a global definition of MetS (10,37) and are also warranted to determine if there is heterogeneity in the power of individual MetS components to predict CVD (28).

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

— The Japan Diabetes Complications Study (JDCS) is a nationwide, multicenter, prospective study of type 2 diabetic patients (38). In 1996, 2,205 patients aged 40–70 years with previously diagnosed type 2 diabetes and HbA_{1c} levels >6.5% were recruited and registered. The eligibility criteria for participating patients has been previously described (38). The duration of the study was 8 years. Of the 2,205 patients, the present study focused on 1,424 patients (771 men and 653 women) who had a complete set of data, including those parameters necessary to satisfy the WHO (2) and NCEP (3) criteria for the definition of MetS at baseline. The JDCS protocol, which is in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki, received ethical approval from the institutional review boards of all of the participating institutes and was undertaken in accordance with the Ethical Guidelines for Clinical Studies of the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare. All of the study participants gave written informed consent.

Both the WHO (2) and the NCEP (3) definitions were used to diagnose MetS in this study. However, because the original cut-off for abdominal obesity in the NCEP definition (waist circumference ≥102 cm for men and ≥89 cm for women) has previously been shown to be inappropriate for Asian populations (35,37) and the number of subjects who met these criteria was extremely low, the cut-off limit was adjusted according to the criteria proposed by the Japan Society for the Study of Obesity (≥85 cm for men or ≥90 cm for women), which were based on the risk of obesity-related disorders in a Japanese population (39). The WHO criteria for obesity were adopted because the waist-to-hip ratio (WHR) was used rather than waist circumference. The criteria used for analysis in this study are shown in Table 3. Because all of the study subjects were diabetic, those who fulfilled two or more of criteria 1a, 2a, 5, or 6 were classified as having WHO-MetS and those who fulfilled two or more of criteria 1b, 2b, 3, or 4 were diagnosed as having NCEP-MetS, using a modified NCEP definition (Table 3). For comparisons with other traditional risk factors for CVD, we also evaluated high LDL cholesterol levels, cigarette smoking, and excessive alcohol intake (40). Medication use, including agents for hypertension and hyperlipidemia, were not considered when diagnosing MetS in this study.

Waist and hip circumferences were measured at the umbilicus and trochanter level, respectively. A baseline dietary survey, comprised of food records and a food frequency questionnaire that included alcohol consumption, was undertaken. Information regarding cigarette smoking was collected using a standardized questionnaire. All laboratory tests were undertaken using the standard methods of each of the participating institutes, apart from the HbA_{1c} assays, which used a common standard, with 5.8% as the upper normal limit. Plasma LDL cholesterol was calculated using Friedewald's equation, except for triglyceride levels >400 mg/dl, in which case the LDL cholesterol data were treated as "missing." To estimate insulin resistance, the homeostasis model assessment of insulin resistance (HOMA-IR) was used (41). Plasma insulin levels and the HOMA-IR were not evaluated in patients treated with insulin.

Patients were assessed for CHD and stroke at baseline and yearly thereafter. In all subjects, a 12-lead electrocardiogram (ECG) was recorded at each assessment. Fatal and nonfatal CHD and stroke events identified during follow-up were certified by at least two members of the experts' committee who were masked as to risk factor status and the other member's diagnosis. With regard to CHD, myocardial infarction was defined according to the WHO Monitoring of Trends and Determinants in Cardiovascular Disease criteria (42) and angina pectoris was defined as typical effort-dependent chest pain or oppression relieved at rest or by using nitroglycerine, as validated by exercise-positive ECG and/or angiography. Stroke events were defined as a constellation of focal or global neurological deficits of sudden or rapid onset and for which there was no apparent cause other than a vascular accident, as determined by a detailed history, a neurological examination, and ancillary diagnostic procedures such as computed tomography, magnetic resonance imaging, cerebral angiography, and lumbar puncture. Stroke events were

classified as cerebral infarction (including embolus), intracranial hemorrhage (including subarachnoid hemorrhage), transient ischemic attack, or stroke of undetermined type in accordance with WHO criteria (43). No cases of asymptomatic lesions detected by brain imaging (i.e., silent infarction) were included. Only "first-ever" CHD or stroke events during the study period were counted for the analysis; if a patient had both CHD and stroke events, each event was counted separately.

Data are presented as means ± SD or as a proportion, unless otherwise specified. To compare the distributions of baseline characteristics between groups, Wilcoxon's rank-sum test or Fisher's exact test was used. Incidence rates in the two groups were assessed by a score test under the Poisson assumption. Cox regression analysis was used to calculate the adjusted hazard ratio (HR) and 95% confidence interval (CI) of MetS risk factors with CHD, stroke, or both. Statistical analyses were performed separately by sex. The SAS software package (Version 8.0, Cary, NC) was used for all analyses. $P < 0.05$ was considered to be significant.

RESULTS

Baseline characteristics and prevalence of the metabolic syndrome

The baseline characteristics of the study subjects are shown in Table 1. In all, 51% of male and 53% of female subjects met WHO criteria for MetS, whereas 45% of male and 38% of female subjects met NCEP criteria for MetS. Plasma insulin levels and HOMA-IR were significantly higher in patients with MetS (both definitions) than in those without MetS; however, there were no significant differences in HbA_{1c} or the frequency of oral hypoglycemic agent use. Insulin usage was significantly lower in women with MetS by either definition and in men with NCEP-MetS. Blood pressure and serum triglycerides were significantly higher and HDL cholesterol was significantly lower in MetS patients, despite the fact that the use of medications for both hypertension and hyperlipidemia was much more common than in patients without MetS. Daily energy intake did not differ between patients with and without MetS (data not shown).

Incidence of cardiovascular disease during follow-up

During the 8-year study period, the total number of CVD events was 117, comprised of 62 CHD and 59 stroke events. The combined incidence (per 1,000 patient-years) of CHD and/or stroke was significantly greater in patients with MetS (except in female patients with NCEP-MetS) than in those without MetS (Table 2).

Hazard ratios of the metabolic syndrome and its individual components for coronary heart disease and stroke

HRs were calculated to determine which definition of MetS was the better predictor of CVD and which of the individual MetS components (or other classic risk factors) could most efficiently predict CVD events in our subjects (Table 3). In male patients, WHO-MetS was not significantly associated with an increased risk for either CHD or stroke separately, but was associated with the combination of both (HR = 1.6). Triglyceride, LDL cholesterol (both for CHD), and blood pressure (≥140/90 mmHg) levels (for stroke) showed higher HRs. NCEP-MetS was a significant predictor of CHD in male patients, although its HR (1.9) was lower than that for triglycerides (2.9) or LDL cholesterol (2.1). Thus, neither definition of MetS was a substantially better predictor of CVD than the component parts in male patients. In contrast, in the female patients, WHO-MetS was a significant and strong predictor of CHD (HR = 2.8), stroke (HR = 3.7), and both CHD and stroke (HR = 3.2). In female patients, none of the individual elements nor the other classic risk factors showed significant increases in HRs, with the exception of hypertension (≥140/90 mmHg) for stroke, although its HR (2.4) was still lower than that for WHO-MetS. NCEP-MetS was not a significant risk factor for CHD or stroke in female patients (Table 3).

To examine the clustering effects of the individual components of MetS, the association between CVD risk and the number of MetS components fulfilled (other than diabetes) was analyzed (Table 3). Increasing the cut-off component number for the diagnosis of NCEP-MetS from ≥2 to ≥3 in male subjects did not dramatically improve the HR but did greatly reduce the number of patients diagnosed as having MetS, from 45 to 14.5% (Table 3). In female patients, changing the diagnostic cut-off component numbers was not particularly beneficial in improving the prognostic value of WHO-MetS (Table 3).

CONCLUSIONS — The prevalence of MetS in our diabetic patients who were free from CVD was not as high as that reported in previous studies that included patients with previous CVD (12–20) but was nevertheless relatively high (38–53%). Although we did not have age-matched nondiabetic control subjects, the prevalence of MetS was much higher than that reported in Japanese general population workers, namely 19.5% in men and 7.9% in women (33). Hypertension and dyslipidemia are much more common in diabetic patients than in nondiabetic subjects (21), and it has been speculated that the features of MetS more easily aggregate, even in the absence of current or previous CVD, leading to the observed increase in the prevalence of MetS. On the other hand, the prevalence of NCEP-MetS in the U.S. general population age 50 years and older is 44% (20), which is relatively close to that in our Japanese diabetic patients. However, even in the U.S. (excluding Asian Americans), the prevalence of MetS in those who have a BMI range equivalent to that of Japanese subjects is not >10% (44). This implies that in the U.S., obesity has a potent impact on the prevalence of MetS, as has also been shown in a recent study (45). This is in contrast to findings in Japan, where diabetes rather than obesity may have the greater influence on the prevalence of MetS, as Japanese diabetic patients are not obese by comparison with white diabetic patients or nondiabetic Japanese subjects (31,32).

The clinical importance of MetS is related to its putative impact on CVD morbidity and mortality. Among Italian patients with type 2 diabetes, the risk for CVD was 4.9 (CI 1.2–20.7) times higher in patients with WHO-MetS than in those without it (16), which was a higher rate than that seen in our male (1.6 [CI 1.0–2.6] times) and female (3.2 [CI 1.6–6.5] times) patients. These results suggest that the clinical impact of MetS on diabetic patients varies by ethnic group. Comparing cardiovascular risk factors in our Japanese patients to those in patients in the U.K. Prospective Diabetes Study (UKPDS) (46,47), hypertension is a common

Table 1—*Baseline characteristics of study subjects, grouped by metabolic syndrome status*

	Total	WHO-defined metabolic syndrome			NCEP-defined metabolic syndrome		
		Without	With	*P*	Without	With	*P*
n							
Men	771	376 (48.8)	395 (51.2)	—	424 (55.0)	347 (45.0)	—
Women	653	310 (47.4)	343 (52.6)	—	405 (62.0)	248 (38.0)	—
Age (years)							
Men	58.2 ± 7.4	57.4 ± 7.6	58.9 ± 7.2	0.01	58.0 ± 7.6	58.4 ± 7.2	0.50
Women	58.7 ± 7.4	57.9 ± 7.7	59.5 ± 7.0	0.01	58.4 ± 7.4	59.4 ± 7.2	0.11
Diabetes duration (years)							
Men	10.9 ± 7.6	11.0 ± 7.6	10.9 ± 7.6	0.66	11.5 ± 7.8	10.2 ± 7.4	0.01
Women	10.1 ± 6.7	10.7 ± 7.3	9.5 ± 6.0	0.10	10.6 ± 7.0	9.4 ± 6.0	0.07
BMI (kg/m^2)							
Men	22.9 ± 2.6	22.0 ± 2.4	23.7 ± 2.6	<0.01	21.8 ± 2.3	24.2 ± 2.4	<0.01
Women	23.4 ± 3.3	22.3 ± 3.0	24.3 ± 3.3	<0.01	22.6 ± 3.1	24.6 ± 3.3	<0.01
Waist circumference (cm)							
Men	82.3 ± 7.7	79.0 ± 7.1	85.3 ± 7.0	<0.01	78.4 ± 6.4	87.0 ± 6.5	<0.01
Women	76.5 ± 9.8	72.4 ± 8.3	80.1 ± 9.7	<0.01	74.1 ± 8.6	80.4 ± 10.4	<0.01
Waist-to-hip ratio							
Men	0.89 ± 0.07	0.86 ± 0.05	0.92 ± 0.06	<0.01	0.87 ± 0.06	0.92 ± 0.06	<0.01
Women	0.83 ± 0.08	0.80 ± 0.06	0.86 ± 0.07	<0.01	0.82 ± 0.07	0.86 ± 0.08	<0.01
Blood pressure (mmHg)							
Men	132 ± 16/78 ± 10	124 ± 13/74 ± 9	139 ± 15/81 ± 10	<0.01	127 ± 16/75 ± 9	137 ± 15/81 ± 9	<0.01
Women	132 ± 17/76 ± 10	124 ± 13/73 ± 9	139 ± 16/79 ± 11	<0.01	128 ± 17/74 ± 10	138 ± 14/80 ± 10	<0.01
HbA_{1c} (%)							
Men	7.61 ± 1.36	7.53 ± 1.42	7.67 ± 1.30	0.05	7.54 ± 1.36	7.68 ± 1.36	0.18
Women	8.05 ± 1.45	8.07 ± 1.51	8.04 ± 1.40	0.79	8.09 ± 1.47	7.99 ± 1.42	0.41
Fasting plasma glucose (mmol/l)*							
Men	8.3 (7.2–10.0)	8.2 (7.0–9.7)	8.6 (7.4–10.4)	<0.01	8.2 (7.1–9.8)	8.6 (7.4–10.3)	0.02
Women	8.6 (7.3–10.2)	8.6 (7.2–10.2)	8.6 (7.3–10.2)	0.74	8.6 (7.2–10.3)	8.5 (7.4–9.9)	0.77
Fasting plasma insulin (pmol/l)*‡							
Men	6.2 (0.5–1.9)	5.4 (0.5–1.9)	7.2 (0.5–1.9)	<0.01	5.2 (0.5–1.9)	7.7 (0.5–1.9)	<0.01
Women	7.1 (0.5–1.9)	5.9 (0.5–1.9)	8.3 (0.6–1.8)	<0.01	6.2 (0.5–1.9)	8.7 (0.5–1.9)	<0.01
HOMA-IR‡							
Men	3.1 ± 3.1	2.6 ± 2.6	3.6 ± 3.4	<0.01	2.4 ± 2.1	3.9 ± 3.8	<0.01
Women	3.3 ± 2.6	2.8 ± 2.2	3.8 ± 2.8	<0.01	2.9 ± 2.1	4.1 ± 3.1	<0.01
Serum total cholesterol (mmol/l)							
Men	5.01 ± 0.90	4.93 ± 0.84	5.09 ± 0.94	0.01	4.97 ± 0.82	5.07 ± 0.98	0.16
Women	5.44 ± 0.85	5.38 ± 0.84	5.50 ± 0.86	0.05	5.41 ± 0.83	5.50 ± 0.89	0.28
Serum HDL cholesterol (mmol/l)							
Men	1.34 ± 0.39	1.42 ± 0.39	1.27 ± 0.38	<0.01	1.48 ± 0.38	1.18 ± 0.34	<0.01
Women	1.47 ± 0.44	1.57 ± 0.45	1.37 ± 0.41	<0.01	1.65 ± 0.43	1.17 ± 0.26	<0.01
Serum triglycerides (mmol/l)†							
Men	1.2 (0.6–1.6)	1.0 (0.7–1.5)	1.5 (0.6–1.6)	<0.01	1.0 (0.7–1.5)	1.6 (0.6–1.6)	<0.01
Women	1.1 (0.6–1.7)	0.9 (0.6–1.6)	1.4 (0.6–1.6)	<0.01	9 (0.7–1.5)	1.6 (0.6–1.6)	<0.01

Current smoker (%; men/women)	43.9/8.7	46.6/8.1	41.3/9.2	0.08/0.38	44.7/7.1	42.9/11.3	0.33/0.049
Excessive alcohol intake (%; men/women)§	12.4/0.2	8.2/0.0	16.4/0.3	<0.01/0.51	7.7/0.3	18.4/0.0	<0.01/0.62
OHA use (without insulin) (%; men/women)	72/77	72/76	73/78	0.38/0.33	72/75	72/79	0.50/0.20
Insulin use (with or without OHA) (%; men/women)	16/20	18/24	15/16	0.16/0.01	20/22	11/15	<0.01/0.02
Medication for hypertension (%; men/women)	22/29	12/17	32/40	<0.01/<0.01	16/23	30/40	<0.01/<0.01
Medication for hyperlipidemia (%; men/women)	15/35	11/30	19/39	<0.01/<0.01	10/32	21/40	<0.01/0.02

Data are *n* (%), means ± SD, †median (interquartile range), or ‡geometric means (1 SD). #Patients with insulin therapy were excluded. §Excessive alcohol intake was defined as more than three drinks (38 g ethanol) per day. OHA, oral hypoglycemic agent.

and potent risk factor for stroke (Table 3) (46). By contrast, HDL cholesterol levels, hypertension, and smoking, all of which were identified as significant risk factors for CHD in UKPDS patients (47), were not associated with a significant elevation of HRs in our Japanese patients (Table 3). Instead, triglyceride levels, which were not significant in UKPDS patients (47), were a strong predictor for CHD in male Japanese patients. These findings imply that the critical therapeutic targets among the components of MetS for preventing cardiovascular complications (28) may need to be modified according to a patient's ethnic group.

Most of the previous studies evaluating the predictive power of MetS for CVD calculated the HRs by including sex as one of the independent variables for statistical adjustment, and very few studies have analyzed CVD risk separately by sex (24). Sex is reportedly an independent predictor for CVD, with an odds ratio of 2.6, which is larger than that of age, HbA_{1c}, and even of MetS itself in type 2 diabetic patients (16). Our results revealed drastic differences in the HRs between sexes. In our female patients, WHO-MetS presented an increased risk for CVD events to a greater degree than could be predicted by the sum of the individual components (Table 3), whereas, in contrast, in our male patients, WHO-MetS was not even a significant risk factor for CVD. At baseline, obvious sex differences were observable in the proportion of subjects who smoked or consumed excessive alcohol, both of which were much higher in male patients. Of particular interest, the proportion of male subjects with excessive alcohol intake was at least twice as high in male patients with MetS than in those without MetS, whereas the proportion of current smokers did not differ in patients with and without MetS (Table 1). It can be speculated that excessive alcohol intake could be closely associated with MetS in male Japanese diabetic patients. Moreover, moderate alcohol intake, which has been shown to be beneficial for preventing CHD in U.S. and European diabetic patients, is not beneficial for Japanese patients (40).

Few studies have applied both the WHO and NCEP definitions of MetS to the same subjects to compare the prevalence of MetS or its predictive value for CVD. It has been reported that the prevalence of WHO-MetS is generally higher than that of NCEP-MetS in both sexes (7,12). This was confirmed in our Japanese diabetic subjects, although the difference in prevalence was not great. Regarding the predictive value of MetS, in subjects without diabetes or other cardiovascular risks, Hunt et al. (27) reported that the NCEP-MetS tended to be more predictive for cardiovascular mortality than the WHO-MetS, whereas Lakka et al. (9) reported a contrary result. In our diabetic patients, the NCEP guidelines, even modified for optimal use by Japanese subjects, were not more predictive than the WHO guidelines in female patients nor did they show excellent clinical usefulness in male patients. One possible explanation for this difference in our patients could be the hypertension cut-off used, with 140/90 mmHg in the WHO defini-

Table 2—*Incidence of coronary heart disease and/or stroke (per 1,000 patient-years) among study subjects grouped by metabolic syndrome status*

		WHO-defined metabolic syndrome			NCEP-defined metabolic syndrome		
	Total (%)	Without (%)	With (%)	*P*	Without (%)	With (%)	*P*
Incidence among							
Men							
CHD	9.8	8.4	11.3	0.34	7.0	13.5	0.04
Stroke	7.7	5.1	10.3	0.05	6.6	9.1	0.35
CHD and/or stroke	17.1	12.7	21.6	0.03	13.0	22.6	0.02
Incidence among							
Women							
CHD	5.5	2.9	8.0	0.04	4.4	7.3	0.27
Stroke	7.2	2.8	11.2	<0.01	6.2	8.8	0.38
CHD and/or stroke	12.6	5.7	19.0	<0.01	10.7	15.6	0.22

Table 3—*Patient prevalence at baseline and hazard ratios for coronary heart disease, stroke, or both in Japanese study subjects grouped by metabolic syndrome status*

	Prevalence at baseline		Hazard ratios for CHD		Hazard ratios for stroke		Hazard ratios for CHD and/or stroke	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Criteria of individual components								
1a. BMI >30 or WHR >0.90 (men) or >0.85 (women)	39.4	37.5	1.3 (0.7–2.5)	1.2 (0.5–3.0)	1.3 (0.7–2.6)	1.1 (0.5–2.3)	1.4 (0.8–2.2)	1.2 (0.6–2.1)
1b. Waist circumference ≥85cm (men) or ≥90 cm (women)	36.7	9.6	1.7 (0.9–3.0)	1.0 (0.2–4.4)	0.90 (0.4–1.9)	1.1 (0.3–3.7)	1.3 (0.8–2.1)	1.1 (0.4–2.8)
2a. SBP ≥140 or DBP ≥90 mmHg	38.9	38.9	0.8 (0.4–1.6)	1.0 (0.4–2.6)	2.1 (1.1–4.3)	2.4 (1.1–5.5)	1.3 (0.8–2.1)	1.8 (1.0–3.2)
2b. SBP ≥130 or DBP ≥85 mmHg	60.7	62.2	0.9 (0.5–1.6)	0.9 (0.4–2.2)	1.4 (0.7–2.9)	1.8 (0.7–4.5)	1.1 (0.6–1.7)	1.2 (0.7–2.4)
3. Triglycerides ≥150 mg/dl	24.8	21.0	2.9 (1.6–5.3)	1.7 (0.6–4.4)	1.1 (0.5–2.4)	0.7 (0.2–1.9)	2.0 (1.2–3.2)	1.1 (0.5–2.2)
4. HDL cholesterol ≤40 mg/dl	19.3	36.3	1.8 (0.9–3.5)	1.5 (0.6–3.6)	1.0 (0.4–2.5)	1.3 (0.6–2.9)	1.6 (0.9–2.6)	1.3 (0.7–2.4)
5. Triglycerides ≥150 mg/dl or HDL cholesterol <35 mg/dl	28.5	27.0	2.8 (1.6–5.2)	1.8 (0.7–4.5)	0.9 (0.4–1.9)	1.6 (0.7–3.5)	1.8 (1.1–2.9)	1.6 (0.9–2.9)
6. Urinary albumin excretion >30 μg/g creatinine	51.2	57.7	1.2 (0.6–2.3)	2.9 (0.9–8.7)	1.8 (0.9–3.8)	1.1 (0.5–2.4)	1.4 (0.9–2.3)	1.6 (0.8–3.0)
7. LDL cholesterol ≥120 mg/dl	45.1	65.2	2.1 (1.1–3.9)	1.2 (0.5–3.2)	0.9 (0.5–1.8)	0.6 (0.3–1.3)	1.4 (0.9–2.3)	0.8 (0.4–1.4)
8. Current smoker	43.9	8.7	1.4 (0.7–2.5)	0.6 (0.1–4.3)	0.9 (0.4–1.8)	2.5 (0.8–7.3)	1.2 (0.7–1.9)	1.6 (0.6–4.1)
9. Alcohol intake >3 drinks/day*	12.4	0.2	0.7 (0.3–2.1)	0.0 (0.0–0.0)	1.0 (0.4–2.8)	0.0 (0.0–0.0)	0.9 (0.4–1.8)	0.0 (0.0–0.0)
Number of components comprising WHO-MetS other than diabetes (i.e., among 1a, 2a, 5, and 6)								
0	18.6	16.4	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
≥1 (vs. <1)	81.5	83.6	1.7 (0.7–4.5)	3.9 (0.5–28.4)	1.0 (0.4–2.5)	2.3 (0.5–9.7)	1.2 (0.7–2.4)	2.8 (0.9–9.0)
≥2 (vs. <2; i.e., WHO-MetS)	51.2	52.5	1.3 (0.7–2.4)	2.8 (1.0–7.9)	2.0 (0.9–4.1)	3.7 (1.4–9.9)	1.6 (1.0–2.6)	3.2 (1.6–6.5)
≥3 (vs. <3)	21.8	20.7	1.8 (0.9–3.5)	1.3 (0.5–3.7)	2.1 (1.0–4.4)	1.1 (0.4–2.7)	1.9 (1.2–3.2)	1.2 (0.6–2.4)
Number of components comprising NCEP-MetS other than diabetes (i.e. among 1b, 2b, 3, and 4)								
0	20.1	21.6	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
≥1 (vs. <1)	79.9	78.4	1.9 (0.7–4.9)	1.6 (0.4–5.6)	1.0 (0.4–2.2)	6.4 (0.9–46.7)	1.3 (0.7–2.4)	2.7 (0.9–7.7)
≥2 (vs. <2; i.e., NCEP-MetS)	45.0	38.0	1.9 (1.0–3.6)	1.7 (0.7–4.0)	1.4 (0.7–2.8)	1.3 (0.6–2.8)	1.8 (1.1–2.8)	1.4 (0.8–2.5)
≥3 (vs. <3)	14.5	11.5	2.5 (1.3–4.9)	0.9 (0.2–3.7)	0.9 (0.3–2.4)	0.3 (0.0–2.2)	1.8 (1.0–3.2)	0.5 (0.2–1.7)

Data are percent or hazard ratios (95% CIs) and are grouped according to individual and combined cardiovascular risk factors mostly comprising the metabolic syndrome as defined by the World Health Organization or the National Cholesterol Education Program. *Equivalent to 38 g ethanol/day. DBP, diastolic blood pressure; SBP, systolic blood pressure; WHR, waist-to-hip ratio.

tion being a significant predictor for stroke, whereas 130/85 mmHg in the NCEP definition is not.

The strengths of our study were that *1*) it is the first prospective study to determine the predictive value of MetS on CVD in Asian subjects, 2) the two most widely used definitions of MetS were applied to the same cohort for the evaluation of their clinical usefulness, and 3) the follow-up was mainly carried out in university or large general hospitals, which facilitated the reliable assessment of follow-up data and event diagnosis/records. Nevertheless, we acknowledge that the study had certain limitations: *1*) Our study subjects were hospital-based patients with diabetes of a relatively long duration; therefore, we cannot make inferences beyond a similar group. 2) We analyzed both intervention (lifestyle modification through diabetes self-management care) and control (continuance of conventional care) groups of the JDCS together, although mild intervention produced only limited differences in glycemic control (0.1–0.2% in HbA_{1c}) as well as a lack of significant differences in known classical cardiovascular risk factors, as previously reported (38). 3) We did not consider medication use in the diagnosis of MetS in this study. 4) Mortality was not analyzed because we did not have sufficient occurrences at this stage of the study.

In conclusion, we found a high prevalence of MetS among diabetic patients with no history of CVD. For Japanese female patients with type 2 diabetes, WHO-MetS but not NCEP-MetS was predictive for CVD. In male patients, although both WHO-MetS and NCEP-MetS were somewhat predictive for CVD, hyperlipidemia or hypertension had equivalent or higher HRs for CVD and seemed to be sufficient for the prediction of CVD. We suggest that the commonly used definitions of MetS, at least in their present forms, have limited clinical usefulness for Asian diabetic patients and may need some ethnic group–specific modifications for global use.

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APPENDIX

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