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Serum lipids and diabetic retinopathy

Sir,

I read the article entitled “Serum lipids and diabetic retinopathy: A cross-sectional study” by Idiculla *et al.*,^[1] published in IJEM. The authors demonstrate in a hospital-based study from Bangalore that elevated serum lipids are associated with retinal hard exudates formation in type 2 diabetic patients. I was surprised that the authors have not done a literature search to see whether similar studies have been done in India. Almost 30 years ago, i.e., in 1984, our group reported for the first time from India (and indeed it was also one of the first reports in the world) that increased LDL cholesterol was associated with maculopathy in type 2 diabetic patients.^[2] Later, in a large population-based study, we reported that there is a significant association of serum triglycerides with diabetic retinopathy and LDL cholesterol with diabetic macular edema.^[3] We also used the same criteria used by the authors to diagnose retinopathy, namely the Early Treatment Diabetic Retinopathy Study (ETDRS) grading system. It is therefore disappointing to note that in this day and age when all published references on a subject can be easily obtained through “Pubmed,” “Google,” and other sources, papers are published from major teaching institutions in India, without quoting Indian references on the subject. As a senior researcher working in the field of diabetes for nearly for 40 years, I would appeal to all juniors who take up research studies that the first rule would be to see what has been already done in the field by other workers by doing a proper literature survey. Only after this, the research should be undertaken. In any case, when the articles get published, due credit should be given to earlier published work in the field from our country by quoting the earlier references and comparing them with their own findings. This is a standard practice followed in all developed nations. In India also we should try to improve the standards of research and hence publications in India should also follow these basic ground rules when articles are published.

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