

Arsenic in water linked to diabetes

Chicago: A new analysis of government data is the first to link low-level arsenic exposure, possibly from drinking water, with Type-2 diabetes, researchers say. The study's limitations make more research necessary. And public water systems were on their way to meeting tougher US arsenic standards as the data was collected.

Still, the analysis of 788 adults' medical tests found a nearly four-fold increase in the risk of diabetes in people with low arsenic concentrations in their urine compared to people with even lower levels.

Previous research outside the United States has linked high levels of arsenic in drinking water with diabetes. It's the link at low levels that's new. The findings appear in Wednesday's Journal of the American Medical Association.

"The good news is, this is preventable," said lead author Ana Navas-Acien of Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore. New safe drinking water standards may be needed if the findings are duplicated in future studies, Navas-Acien said. She said they've begun a new study of 4,000 people. AP