

Press statement:

Following concerns raised by another paper in Diabetologia the EASD asked a team of researchers in Scotland (the Scottish Diabetes Research Network –Epidemiology group) to examine the question of cancer risk in insulin glargine users in Scotland.

Using anonymised patient data linked to the Scottish Cancer Registry Data we were able to show that insulin glargine users as a whole do not have an altered risk of all cancers combined or any of the main cancers, including breast cancer. This is reassuring news.

It is already well known that there are complex links between cancers risks and diabetes. For example, being overweight is associated with cancer risk and is associated with diabetes. When we examined different subgroup of insulin glargine users cancer risk (all cancers and breast cancer specifically) was slightly higher in some subgroups of users but importantly they were lower in other subgroups of insulin glargine users. Our conclusion is therefore that these altered risks do not reflect an effect of insulin glargine itself but instead reflect the background risk of certain patients who are treated with different insulin regimes.

Professor Helen Colhoun who led the analysis stated “Our analysis was reassuring. Patients should not stop their insulin treatments.”