

Glucose turnover rate and peripheral insulin sensitivity in alcoholic patients without liver damage

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Glucose intolerance is frequently found in alcoholic patients and an impaired insulin response has been documented in them. To look for alternative mechanisms that could explain this intolerance, a glucose turnover using tritiated glucose and an euglycemic glucose clamp were performed to measure the glucose production rate and peripheral insulin sensitivity, respectively. Two groups of recently abstinent chronic male alcoholic patients without evidence of liver damage were studied. The glucose turnover technique showed a higher basal glucose production rate in alcoholics, compared with normal volunteers (2.83 ± 0.29 vs. 1.84 ± 0.22 mg/kg/min); an intravenous ethanol load significantly increased this rate. The euglycemic glucose clamp did not show peripheral insulin resistance in alcoholics, compared with controls. © 1989 S. Karger AG, Basel.