

Living in COVID Times - IDF Europe COVID & Diabetes Survey

Experiences from People living with Diabetes



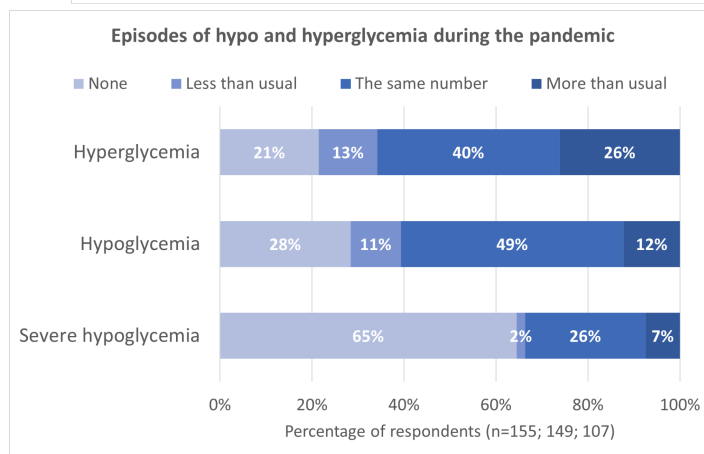
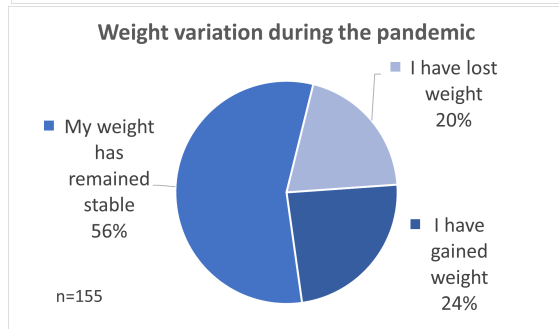
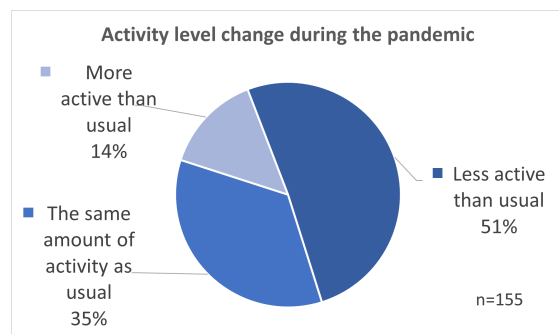
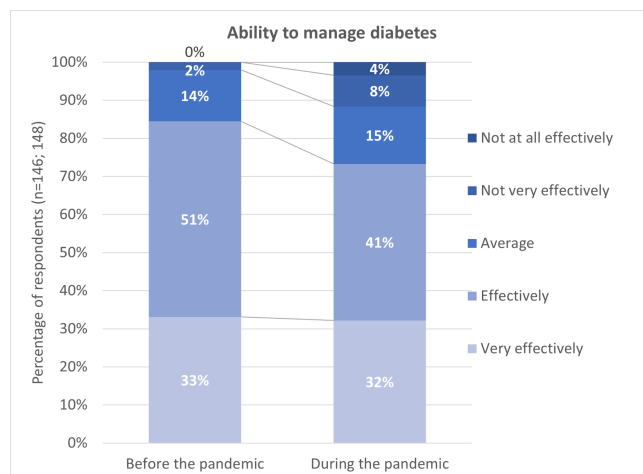
France

Summary

In France, the COVID-19 pandemic led to severe disruptions in the ability of people living with diabetes (PwD) to access care. Their ability to manage their diabetes remained largely unchanged, with a small proportion reporting being less able to follow their diabetes regimen. Nevertheless, the proportion of people who rated their ability to manage their diabetes as not very effective or not effective at all increased to 12% from just 2% pre-COVID. Accessing medicines, technologies, and supplies was not a challenge in France during the crisis; but, as in many other countries, lack of guidance was an issue. Almost half the respondents did not receive any advice from their usual healthcare professionals and 84% reported that more information would have helped them manage their diabetes better. The psychological impact of COVID-19 on PwD was significant: one in four respondents experienced more frequent episodes of low mood during the pandemic and one in three reported being very or extremely anxious. The pre-existing infrastructure, coupled with a rapid move by the French healthcare system to allow reimbursement of virtual consultations resulted in one third of respondents availing of such remote consultations. These consultations were generally regarded as useful, although a majority of respondents would not choose to go virtual in the future.

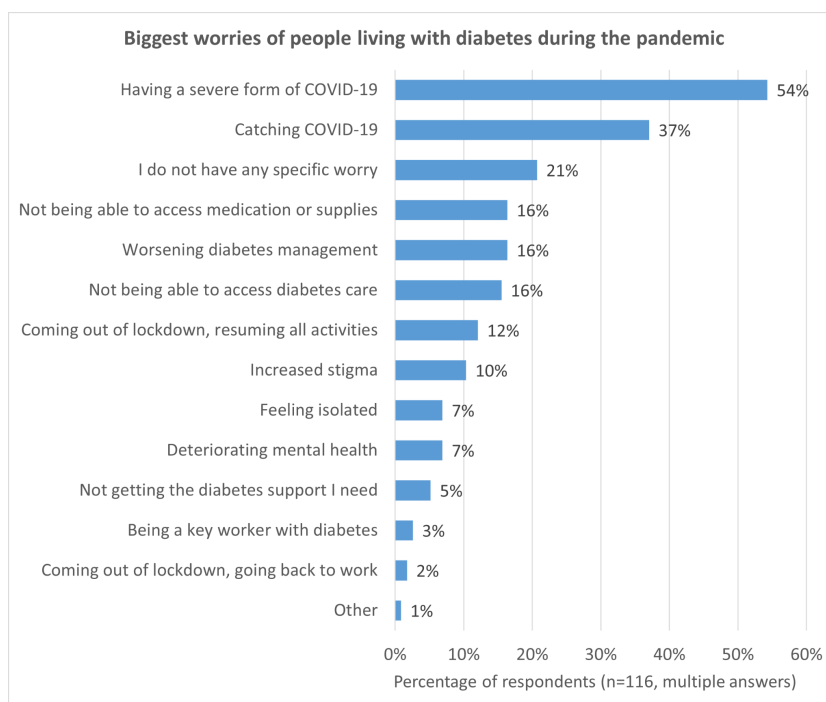
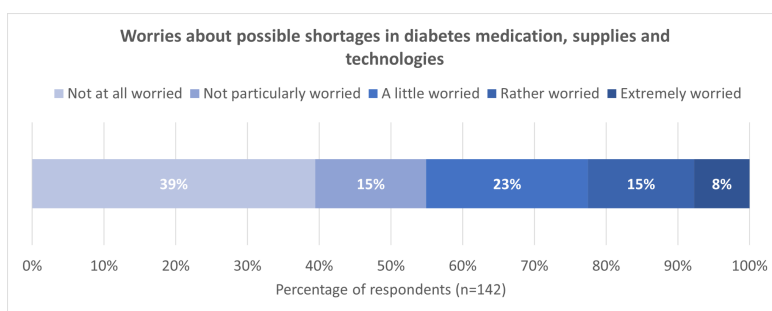
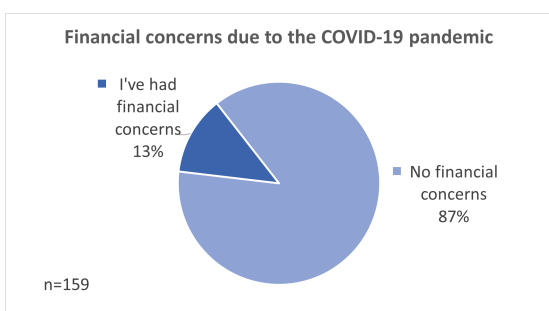
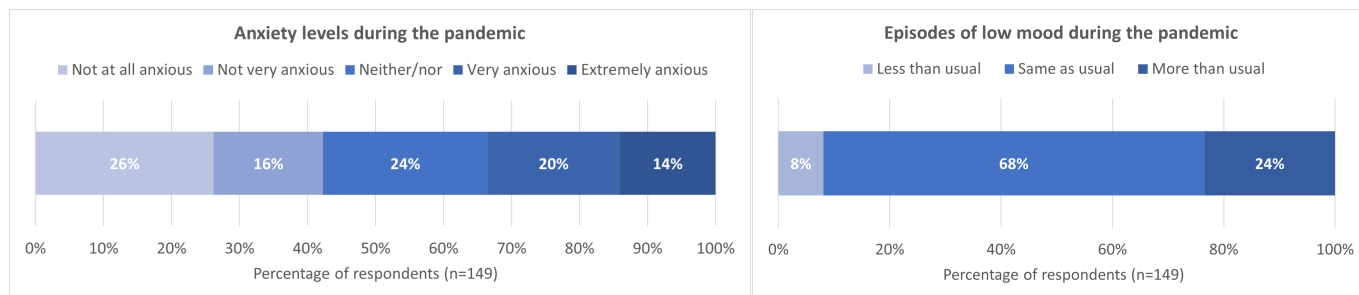
Diabetes Management

While 73% of respondents rated their ability to manage their diabetes as effective or very effective, around 10% felt that their ability had worsened during the crisis. There was also an increase in blood glucose variability and in the frequency of hyperglycemic episodes, albeit for a minority of respondents. Reflecting the strict lockdown measures, physical activity levels plummeted during the pandemic.



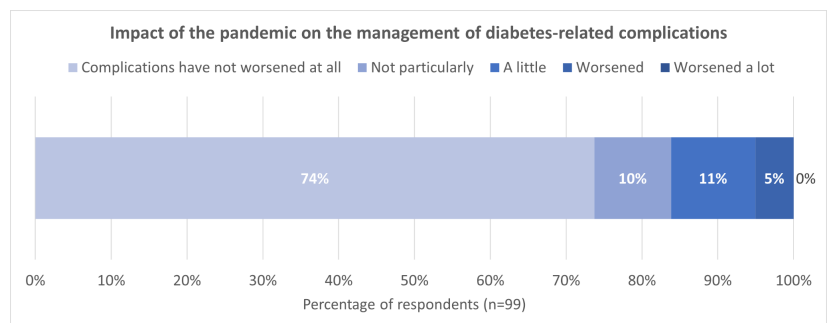
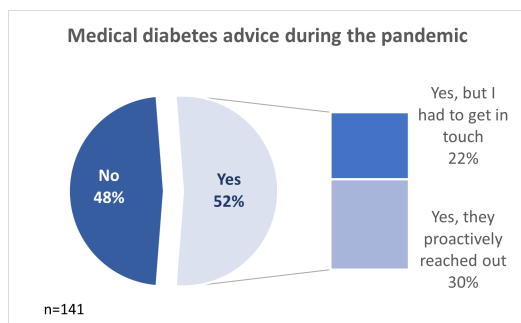
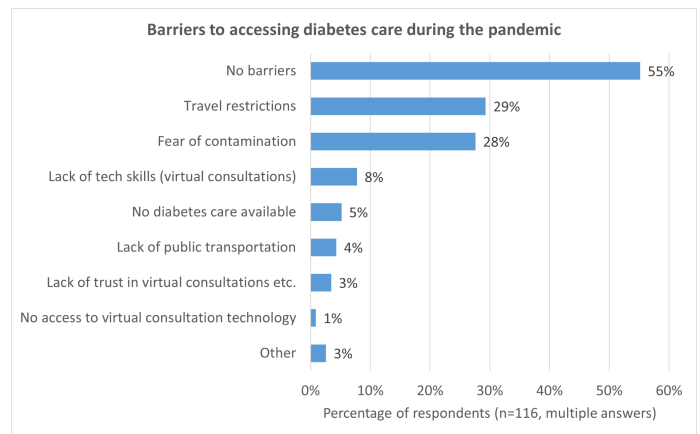
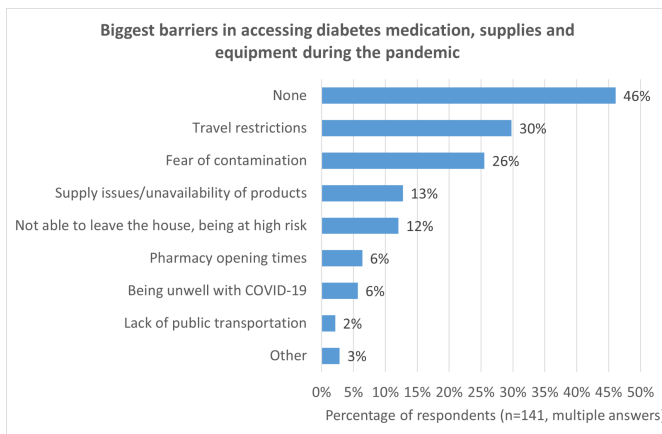
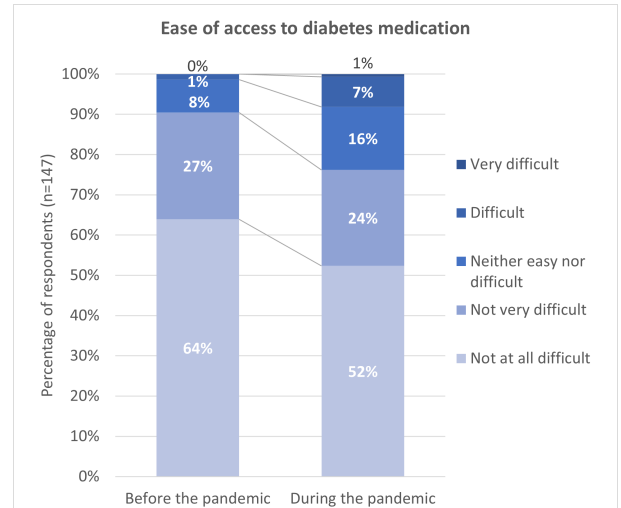
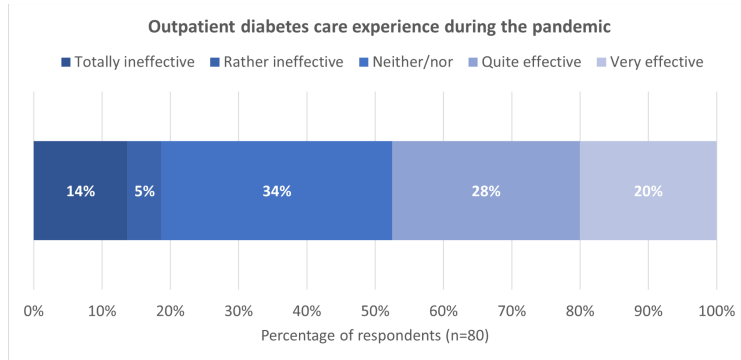
Psychological Impact

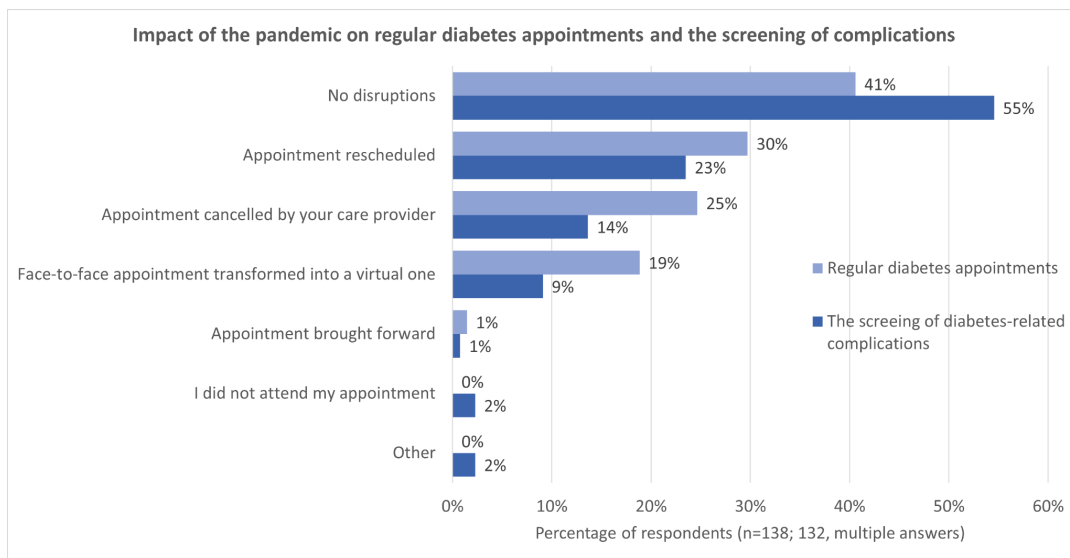
About one third of respondents reported being very or extremely anxious during the pandemic, with one in four experiencing more episodes of low mood than usual. Developing a severe form of COVID-19 and catching the disease in the first place were by far the biggest concerns, reported by 54% and 37% of respondents respectively. Less than 20% of respondents worried about accessing medicines or care, or managing their diabetes. 13% reported experiencing financial concerns as a result of the pandemic.



Access to Medicines, Supplies, Technologies, and Care

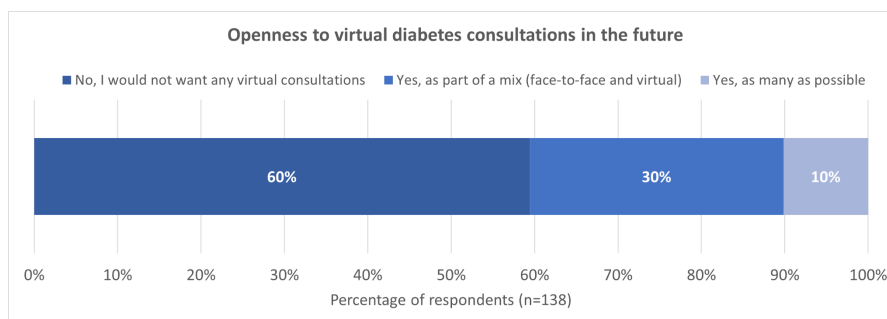
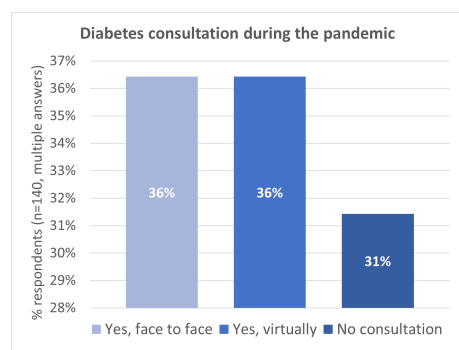
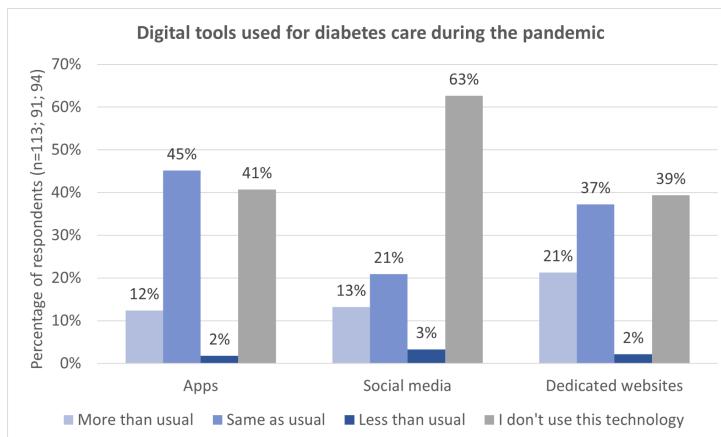
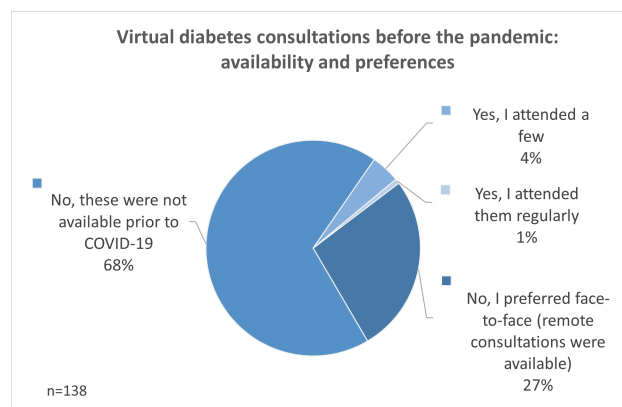
During the pandemic, 8% of the respondents reported experiencing some degree of difficulty in accessing medicines and supplies. This figure is far higher than before COVID, but still remains relatively low. Accessing care proved a more significant challenge. Just under one third of respondents had their appointments rescheduled and one quarter had their appointments cancelled. Travel restrictions and fear of contamination were mentioned as the single biggest barriers to accessing care.





E-health

Over one third of survey respondents attended virtual consultations during the pandemic, as many as attended a physical consultation and a huge increase compared to pre-COVID times. Those virtual consultations took place mainly via phone and online platforms, but emails were also sometimes used. Such consultations seemed to be very well received by PwD who attended them. However, 60% of respondents in France reported that they would not be interested in virtual consultations in the future.



Background

This country profile was developed as part of 'Living in COVID times', an online survey conducted by IDF Europe between August and October 2020. It collected answers from 3,480 people living with diabetes across 32 countries in Europe and aimed to understand how the COVID-19 crisis affected PwD's lives and their diabetes care. In France, 165 people responded to the survey. Most of them were themselves living with diabetes (a little over half with type 2 and under half with type 1 diabetes). Most respondents were between the ages of 51 and 80 and gender representation was balanced (52% men, 48% women). The median time respondents had been living with diabetes was about 20 years, and the answers covered a broad spectrum and reflected a variety of situations.

The Europe-wide report "Living in COVID times" can be found [here](#).

If you wish to share a testimonial of your life with diabetes in France during the pandemic, write to idfeurope@idf-europe.org. We look forward to hearing from you!



**International
Diabetes Federation**
Europe