



1725 I Street NW • Suite 510 • Washington, DC 20006
Tel 202-659-0599 • Fax 202-659-0709 • www.asn-online.org

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Contact: Shari Leventhal: 202-416-0658, sleventhal@asn-online.org (before Oct. 27)
October 27–28: ASN Management Office, America’s Center, Room 130, (314) 342-5511
Friday, Oct. 29 – Monday, Nov. 1: ASN Media Room, America’s Center, Room 250,
(314) 342-5508 (media room), 202-236-8142 (after hours)

DIALYSIS PATIENTS HALF AS LIKELY TO BE TREATED AFTER A HEART ATTACK

St. Louis, MO (October 30, 2004)— Despite a higher risk of death after a heart attack, dialysis patients are only half as likely to receive standard treatment after suffering from one, compared to the general population, according to a new study being presented at the American Society of Nephrology’s 37th Annual Meeting and Scientific Exposition in St. Louis, Missouri.

“The difference between the treatment of dialysis and non-dialysis patients appears to be based primarily on their status as dialysis patients,” says lead author of the study, David Charytan, MD, a clinical and research Fellow at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts. “Physicians seem to be more reluctant to prescribe invasive but potentially life-saving therapies for dialysis patients than for their other patients.”

The study involved more than 150,000 patients who were admitted with a heart attack in 2001 and examined whether dialysis patients received less aggressive care for their heart disease than non-dialysis patients. Findings show that dialysis patients were approximately half as likely to have their coronary arteries studied or coronary blockages repaired.

“In light of these findings, doctors should evaluate their practices and consider more frequent use of angiography, bypass surgery, and other coronary interventions in dialysis patients,” says Charytan.

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death among patients on dialysis with kidney failure or end stage renal disease (ESRD) on dialysis. Cardiovascular damage begins as soon as the kidney loses function and increases in severity during the progression of kidney disease.

The study results will be presented at a news briefing from 12:15 – 1:15 p.m. on Friday, October 29 in Room 251 of the America’s Center. The study abstract, “Underutilization of Coronary Angiography and Revascularization in Dialysis Patients is Not Explained by Comorbidity and is Associated with Increased Mortality after Myocardial Infarction” (SA-PO407) will be presented during a poster session on Saturday, October 30 at 10:00 AM in Exhibit Halls 2-4 of the America’s Center.

MORE

The ASN is a not-for-profit organization of 9,000 physicians and scientists dedicated to the study of nephrology and committed to providing a forum for the promulgation of information regarding the latest research and clinical findings on kidney diseases. ASN's Renal Week 2004, the largest nephrology meeting of its kind, will provide a forum for more than 12,000 nephrologists to discuss the latest findings in renal research and engage in educational sessions relating advances in the care of patients with kidney and related disorders from October 27-November 1, 2004 at the America's Center in St. Louis, Missouri.

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