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FOR KIDNEY DISEASE PATIENTS, STAYING ACTIVE MIGHT MEAN STAYING ALIVE

Lack of Exercise Increases Risk of Premature Death

Washington, DC (Monday, October 5, 2009) — Getting off the couch could lead to a longer life for kidney disease patients, according to a study appearing in an upcoming issue of the *Clinical Journal of the American Society Nephrology* (CJASN). The findings indicate that, as in the general population, exercise has significant health benefits for individuals with kidney dysfunction.

Many patients with chronic kidney disease (CKD) die prematurely, but not from effects directly related to kidney problems. Because physical activity has known health benefits, Srinivasan Beddhu, MD (Salt Lake City VA Healthcare System and University of Utah), and his colleagues researched the question of whether or not exercise can help prolong CKD patients' lives.

The study included 15,368 adult participants (5.9% of whom had CKD) in the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey III, a survey of the US population. After answering a questionnaire on the frequency and intensity of their leisure time physical activity, participants were divided into inactive, insufficiently active, and active groups. On average, participants were followed for seven to nine years.

The researchers found that 28% of individuals with CKD were inactive, compared with 13.5% of non-CKD individuals. Active and insufficiently active CKD patients were 56% and 42% less likely to die during the study than inactive CKD patients, respectively. Similar survival benefits associated with physical activity were seen in individuals without CKD.

"These data suggest that increased physical activity might have a survival benefit in the CKD population. This is particularly important as most patients with stage III CKD die before they develop end stage renal disease," the authors wrote.

The authors report no financial disclosures. Study co-authors include Bradley Baird, Jennifer Zitterkoph, Jill Neilson, and Tom Greene, PhD (University of Utah School of Medicine).

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The article, entitled “Associations of Physical Activity with Mortality in Chronic Kidney Disease: NHANES III,” will appear online at http://cjasn.asnjournals.org/ on October 8, 2009, doi 10.2215/CJN.01970309.

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