

Outpatient Care for Kidney Disease May Lead to Complications

Small study found side effects such as low blood sugar, high potassium, severe dizziness

THURSDAY, Feb. 20, 2014 (HealthDay News) -- Many kidney disease patients suffer side effects from their outpatient medical care, according to a small new study.

Researchers looked at 267 people with chronic kidney disease and discovered that more than 69 percent had experienced at least one harmful event from outpatient medical treatment, and about 38 percent had suffered more than one such incident.

The most common complications were low blood sugar and high blood potassium, the investigators found. Low blood sugar in patients with diabetes, and falling or severe dizziness in patients without diabetes were most often associated with other complications of outpatient treatment.

Chronic kidney disease is a gradual loss of kidney function, according to the American Society of Nephrology. The disease may be "silent" -- causing no symptoms -- for years, but it can progress to complete kidney failure.

The new study will appear in an upcoming issue of the *Journal of the American Society of Nephrology*.

The findings suggest that taking steps to prevent these complications would reduce the rate of kidney failure in patients, said study author Dr. Jeffrey Fink, of the University of Maryland School of Medicine.

Previous studies have examined the risks faced by chronic kidney disease patients when they're hospitalized, but most of their medical care is provided outside of the hospital, the study authors pointed out in a journal news release.

Chronic kidney disease affects 60 million people worldwide.

More information

The National Kidney Foundation has more about [chronic kidney disease](#).

SOURCE: *Journal of the American Society of Nephrology*, news release, Feb. 20, 2014



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