GFR May Predict Malnutrition in the Elderly

BY DOUG BRUNK

SAN DIEGO — An estimated glomerular filtration rate of less than 30 mL/min is associated with malnutrition in all ages, while an estimated GFR between 30 and 59 mL/min is associated with malnutrition only in people older than age 60 years.

Those are key findings from a study that compared the prevalence of malnutrition in the elderly with the prevalence in younger age groups and that compared the risk of malnutrition using estimated GFR (eGFR) estimated by creatinine and cystatin C–based equations.

Researchers at Tufts Medical Center, Boston, examined the prevalence of malnutrition and its relationship to eGFR in 6,877 adults over the age of 20 years who participated in the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey 1988-1994.

The investigators calculated glomerular filtration rate with serum creatinine and with a serum cystatin C equation.

Dr. Cindy Huang, a nephrology fellow at the medical center, reported that the prevalence of malnutrition increased with age: 9% in those aged 20-49 years, 12% in those aged 40-49, 15% in those 60-79, and 22% in those older than 80 years.

The researchers found an association between an eGFR of less than 30 mL/min and malnutrition in all ages, while an eGFR between 30 and 59 mL/min was associated with malnutrition only in people over age 60 years, Dr. Huang said in a poster presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Nephrology. ■

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