

Procedure improves health of cancer patients

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This is Colin Hutchison, M.D. from University Hospital Birmingham in the UK.
Credit: None

A novel hemodialysis procedure helps restore kidney function and increases lifespan in patients with multiple myeloma, according to a study appearing in the April 2009 issue of the *Clinical Journal of the American Society Nephrology* (CJASN).

Multiple [myeloma](#) is a form of cancer that causes severe [kidney failure](#). Once multiple myeloma patients require [dialysis](#) to treat their kidney failure, most live less than a year. Unfortunately, there are no effective treatments to help these cancer patients.

However, researchers have suspected that a procedure called high cut-

off hemodialysis, which removes large immunological proteins that cause kidney damage in myeloma patients, might improve patients' health and allow them to live longer (when used in combination with [chemotherapy](#)). To test high cut-off hemodialysis' potential, Colin Hutchison, MD (University Hospital Birmingham, United Kingdom), and his colleagues studied 19 individuals with multiple myeloma who underwent the procedure while receiving chemotherapy. Thirteen of the 19 patients completed the full treatment protocol, and in all 13 immunological proteins were reduced. In addition, [kidney function](#) was restored in all 13 patients.

"This study saw over 70% of patients becoming independent of dialysis, which is greatly above the rate expected in this setting," said Dr. Hutchison. "High cut-off hemodialysis is exciting because it offers a novel way of treating this group of patients who have historically done very poorly," he added.

The study was a pilot study and therefore not controlled. Thus, it cannot be used to change medical practice. The EuLITE trial (European trial of free light chain removal by extended haemodialysis) is a randomized control trial designed to further evaluate this treatment.

More information: The article, entitled "Treatment of Acute Renal Failure Secondary to Multiple Myeloma with Chemotherapy and Extended High Cut-Off Hemodialysis," will appear online at cjasn.asnjournals.org/ on Wednesday, April 1, 2009, doi 10.2215/CJN.04590908.

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