

Kidney patients living longer on dialysis, study shows

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Better treatments, tighter management of disease may explain promising trend.

(HealthDay)—New statistics suggest that kidney patients on dialysis are surviving longer.

"Declining mortality rates are the clearest evidence of improving outcomes in dialysis patients," lead researcher Eric Weinhandl, principal investigator with the Peer Kidney Care Initiative in Minneapolis, said in a news release from the National Kidney Foundation.

"The transition to dialysis is difficult, both physically and psychologically," Weinhandl said. "However, clinical outcomes on dialysis are improving and patient survival is increasing."

Researchers found that [death rates](#) fell in [dialysis patients](#) who were treated in freestanding facilities. The death rates fell by 15 percent in the first year of treatment in new patients, and by about 19 percent in

continuing patients.

Weinhandl said there are probably many reasons for the decline in death rates, including better drug-based management of heart disease, higher vaccination rates and changes in treatment of anemia. The decline also coincided with the advent of new treatment guidelines for [kidney disease](#).

The study was presented Thursday at a National Kidney Foundation meeting in Dallas. Research presented at meetings should be viewed as preliminary until published in a peer-reviewed medical journal.

"It is gratifying to see patients living longer on dialysis," Kerry Willis, chief scientific officer of the National Kidney Foundation, said in the news release. "Improved practice means that people are initiating dialysis in a generally healthier state, which leads to better long-term outcomes for kidney failure patients."

More information: Visit the [National Kidney Foundation](#) for more on dialysis.

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