

Study uncovers link between constipation and kidney disease

November 10 2016

Researchers have discovered a link between constipation and poor kidney health. The findings, which appear in an upcoming issue of the *Journal of the American Society of Nephrology (JASN)*, suggest that the diagnosis and management of constipation might be helpful for preventing or treating kidney disease.

Constipation is a common condition, and it can have a variety of impacts on health. For example, [constipation](#) is known to increase individuals' risk of cardiovascular disease, potentially through effects caused by gut bacteria.

To investigate any possible association between constipation and [kidney disease](#), Keiichi Sumida, MD and Csaba Kovesdy, MD (University of Tennessee Health Science Center and Memphis VA Medical Center) studied information on more than 3.5 million US veterans with normal kidney function who were initially examined in 2004 and 2006 and were followed through 2013.

Compared with patients without constipation, patients with constipation had a 13% higher likelihood of developing chronic kidney disease and a 9% higher likelihood of developing [kidney failure](#), after adjusting for various patient characteristics. More severe constipation was linked with an incrementally higher risk for both [chronic kidney disease](#) and kidney failure.

"Our findings highlight the plausible link between the gut and the

kidneys and provide additional insights into the pathogenesis of kidney disease progression," said Dr. Kovesdy. "Our results suggest the need for careful observation of kidney function trajectory in patients with constipation, particularly among those with more severe constipation." He added that if additional research reveals that constipation plays a causal role in kidney disease, treatment of constipation through lifestyle modifications and/or use of probiotics could potentially protect patients' kidney [health](#).

More information: *JASN*, [DOI: 10.1681/ASN.2016060656](https://doi.org/10.1681/ASN.2016060656)

Provided by American Society of Nephrology

Citation: Study uncovers link between constipation and kidney disease (2016, November 10) retrieved 5 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-11-uncovers-link-constipation-kidney-disease.html>

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