

# Nephrology referrals identify many patients at low risk for progression

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(HealthDay)—Current guidelines for nephrology referral identify many

patients at low risk for progression, according to a study published online Aug. 24 in the *American Journal of Kidney Diseases*.

Vishal Duggal, M.D., from the Veterans Affairs Palo Alto Health Care System in California, and colleagues conducted an observational cohort study involving 399,644 veterans with [chronic kidney disease](#) from Oct. 1, 2015, to Sept. 30, 2016, to examine the number of patients identified for nephrology referral and their predicted risk for [kidney failure](#).

The researchers found that 66,276 patients met laboratory indications for referral; 17.7 percent of these patients were referred to nephrology in the following year. Among all patients meeting laboratory referral criteria, the median two-year predicted risk for kidney failure was 1.5 percent. Potential referral volume would be reduced from 66,276 to 38,229 patients if referral was restricted to patients with predicted risk  $\geq$ 1 percent in addition to laboratory indications. Basing referrals on predicted risk alone, a two-year risk threshold of 1 percent or higher would identify a similar number of patients as laboratory-based criteria, with a median predicted risk of 2.3 percent (72,948 patients).

"A significant proportion of patients identified by laboratory-based indications for nephrology referral have a predicted risk of kidney failure less than 1 percent," the authors write. "These findings may inform clinical decision support development to target [nephrology](#) referrals to [patients](#) most likely to benefit."

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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