Study examines symptom burden before and after starting dialysis in older adults

10 November 2022

"Dialysis initiation may affect individual kidney failure-related symptoms differently. However, the change in symptoms before and after start of dialysis in older patients has not been studied before," said Dr. de Rooij.

The analysis revealed that in the year before dialysis initiation, symptom number increased +3.6 and symptom burden increased +13.3. In the year after, symptom number decreased -0.9 and burden decreased -5.9. At dialysis initiation, "fatigue," "decreased interest in sex" and "difficulty becoming sexually aroused" had the highest prevalence of 81%, 69% and 68%, with a burden of 2.7, 2.4 and 2.3, respectively. "Fatigue" somewhat improved after dialysis initiation, whereas the prevalence and burden of sexual symptoms further increased.

"We hope these results could help inform older patients with kidney failure who decide to start dialysis on what to expect regarding the development of their symptom burden," said Dr. de Rooij.


Provided by American Society of Nephrology