

Sexual dysfunction in male patients on dialysis: Assessment with the International Index of Erectile Function

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Aleksaite A.¹, Sukackiene D.¹, Laucyte-Cibulskiene A.¹, Brauklyte J.¹, Adomaitis R.¹, Tyla R.², Miglinas M.¹

¹Vilnius University, Faculty of Medicine, Vilnius, Lithuania, ²Vilnius University hospital Santaros klinikos, Center of Urology, Vilnius, Lithuania

Introduction & Objectives: Sexual dysfunction is a common problem that remains difficult to diagnose and treat in patients with chronic kidney disease (CKD). As a result of the multi-system disease processes present in many uremic men, it is apparent that the pathogenesis of erectile dysfunction (ED) is most probably multifactorial.

Objective: This study aimed to determine the prevalence and severity of sexual function in men on dialysis, who are on kidney transplant waiting list by using the International Index of Erectile Function (IIEF) questionnaire.

Materials & Methods: We conducted a cross-sectional study in our dialysis unit in 2018. ED was evaluated using the IIEF questionnaire that consists of 5 domains (erectile function, orgasmic function, sexual desire, intercourse satisfaction, overall satisfaction) scores. Body composition was examined using bioelectrical impedance analysis (BIA), anthropometric measurements (height, weight, BMI, waist circumference) and handgrip strength were also performed. Men were divided into three groups according to dialysis duration: <1 year, 2 years and more than 2 years. Statistical analysis was performed using R version 3.4.3, p values < 0.05 were considered as statistical significant.

Results: We assessed 44 male patients with a mean age of 45.04 ± 11.3 years (range: 22-65). Seventeen patients (38.7%) had no ED; 5 (11.3%) had mild 11.3% ED; 7 (15.9%) had moderate ED; 15 (34%) had severe ED. The prevalence of any ED for the patients <50 y and >or=50 y was 64.7% and 70%, respectively. The duration of dialysis treatment was 18 (3;204) months. 73.3% had ED if they were on dialysis more than 2 years (<2 years 69.2 %, <1 year 56.2%). The prevalence of sexual dysfunctions in the order of their frequency was as follows: sexual desire (97.7%), overall satisfaction (90.9%), erectile function (65.9%), orgasmic function (63.6%) and intercourse satisfaction (47.3%). There was found positive relationship between sexual desire and handgrip strength ($p < 0.07$). No more significant relationships between groups (waist circumference, BMI, muscle mass, fat free mass) were found.

Conclusions: Men with end stage renal disease frequently suffer from reduced libido, erectile dysfunction, and difficulty reaching orgasm. Evaluations for ED should be included in routine assessment of dialysis patients. Nephrologists should pay attention to the problem of ED in order to improve the quality of their life.