



Shaping Tomorrow's Nephrology: Insight-Driven Kidney Care

KSN SEOUL, KOREA
2026

The 46th Annual Meeting of the Korean Society of Nephrology



Jun 11 (Thu) – 14 (Sun), 2026

COEX, Seoul, Korea

Abstract Type : Poster exhibition

Abstract Submission No.: A-0612

Abstract Topic : Dialysis

Effect of body mass index on clinical outcomes stratified by age in patients undergoing maintenance hemodialysis

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Objectives : Our study aimed to investigate the association between body mass index and clinical outcomes by age group in a population-based cohort of patients having HD.

Methods : The data collected by the Health Insurance Review and Assessment Service during HD quality assessment programs and the claims and death data were retrospectively analyzed (n = 71,382). The patients were divided into four groups according to their age. Each group was further divided into four groups in accordance with previous guidelines: underweight group; normal group; overweight group; and obese group.

Results : The age groups were composed of the following: 41,395 patients aged <65 years, 18,329 patients aged 65–74 years, 10,354 patients aged 75–84 years, and 1,304 patients aged ≥ 85 years. In all age groups, the all-cause mortality of the underweight group was higher than that of the normal group. Multivariable Cox regression analyses revealed that the cardiovascular event outcomes of the patients aged < 65 years and those aged 65–74 years in the overweight and obese groups were better than those in the normal group. However, in patients aged ≥ 75 years, the association between body mass index and cardiovascular event outcomes was attenuated.

Conclusions : Low body mass index, was associated with poor patient survival irrespective of age. Conversely, patients in overweight or obese groups had modestly lower or comparable all-cause mortality relative to those with normal body mass index. In patients aged < 65 years, patients with low body mass index showed a higher risk of cardiovascular event compared with those with normal body mass index.