

Current Status of Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) in Taiwan

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The incidence and prevalence of end-stage renal disease (ESRD) in Taiwan were among the highest in the world. In Taiwan, despite of the ESRD patients only comprise 0.15-0.20 % of population, the medical expenses of dialysis therapy cost over 7% of national health insurance budgets. From the TW3H Survey in 2002, the prevalent rate of CKD stage 3-5 was reported around 6.43%. This high prevalence of CKD made the Department of Health and Taiwan Society of Nephrology to cooperate for effectively conducting a national preventive project for the ultimate goal of decreasing the incidence of ESRD in Taiwan.

Traditional risk factors for CKD include the glomerular diseases, hypertension, diabetes, and hyperlipidemia. Most doctors and patients will pay special attention to these conditions. However, there are many other factors that are also risk for CKD. Among them, the low awareness by both doctors and patients is worth considering. Use of analgesics, herbal therapy, and betelnut chewing may also be important risk factors in Taiwan. Late referral and psychosocial status may also contribute.

There have been several strategies and plans from Taiwan Society of Nephrology and Department of Health for CKD prevention. They include enhancing the education of CKD prevention, promoting screening of CKD for early detection and early treatment, providing the counseling service of CKD prevention and control, and implementing the case management of CKD patients in medical services. Furthermore, integrated community screenings for chronic diseases in adults and elderly were implemented, and followed by another community healthcare management programs. The national health insurance reimbursed for pre-ESRD (stage 3b-5) care in 2007, and again for early CKD (Stage 1-3a) care in 2011. The age adjusted prevalence of ESRD has become plateau recently.