

Electrolyte & Blood Pressure

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전 해 질 고 혈 압 연 구 회
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Editor-in-Chief of Electrolytes & Blood Pressure

Division of Nephrology, Department of Internal Medicine, Seoul National University Bundang Hospital, 82, Gumi-ro 173Beon-gil, Bundang-gu, Seongnam, Gyeonggi-do 13620, Korea

TEL : +82-31-787-7051 | FAX : +82-31-787-4052 | E-mail: junhaegil@gmail.com

Business Correspondence : Should be sent to the Korean Society for Electrolyte and Blood Pressure Research

Division of Nephrology, Department of Internal Medicine, Chonnam National University Hospital 42, Jebongro, Dong-gu, Gwangju 61469, Korea

TEL : +82-62-220-6499 | FAX : +82-62-225-8578

E-mail : junhaegil@gmail.com | Web : <http://eng.kidneykorea.com>

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#601, Jangyang Building, 15 Eulji-ro 14-gil, Jung-gu, Seoul 04550, Korea

TEL : +82-2-713-2446 | FAX : +82-2-2279-3960 | E-mail : med2002@nate.com

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Renal Replacement Therapy For Elderly Patients with ESKD Through Shared Decision-Making

Jin Eop Kim^{1*}, Woo Yeong Park^{2*}, Hyunsuk Kim¹

¹Department of Internal Medicine, Chuncheon Sacred Heart Hospital, Chuncheon, Gangwon-do, Republic of Korea;

²Department of Internal Medicine, Keimyung University Dongsan Hospital, Keimyung University School of Medicine, Daegu, Republic of Korea

*These two authors contributed to the manuscript equally

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Corresponding Author: Hyunsuk Kim, MD, PhD
Department of Internal Medicine, Hallym University
Medical Center, Chuncheon Sacred Heart Hospital,
Chuncheon-si, 24253 Gangwon-do, Korea
Tel: +82-33-240-5196; Fax: +82-33-240-5498
E-mail: nephrokim@hallym.ac.kr

The incidence and prevalence of end-stage kidney disease (ESKD) in Korea are increasing, and ESKD constitutes a very important medical and social issue. Elderly dialysis patients have the highest risk of early mortality within 3 months after initiating dialysis, and geriatric syndromes such as aging, frailty, functional impairment, and cognitive impairment are crucial for the prognosis of elderly patients. Shared decision-making (SDM) is an approach through which clinicians and patients can achieve informed preferences, thereby yielding better clinical outcomes and quality of life. Through SDM-based, close consultation among patients, families, and healthcare providers, an ESKD Life-Plan for elderly patients should be established. A multidisciplinary approach led by nephrologists can help them to provide proper vascular access for dialysis at the right time, with the right evidence, and to the right patient. Strategies that can improve peritoneal dialysis in elderly patients include assisted peritoneal dialysis, homecare support programs, and automated peritoneal dialysis. In order to enhance the role of kidney transplantation in elderly patients with ESKD, it is necessary to accurately identify patients' clinical conditions before transplantation and to perform active rehabilitation activities and postoperative management to promote recovery after transplantation. With the aging population and the increase in ESKD in the elderly, clinicians must identify factors affecting the mortality and quality of life of elderly dialysis patients.

Key Words: Elderly, Renal replacement therapy, Hemodialysis, Peritoneal dialysis, Kidney transplantation, End-Stage Kidney Disease Life-Plan, Shared decision making

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1. Current status of elderly ESKD

The increasing prevalence of diabetes and hypertension, in combination with population aging, has led to a drastic increase in end-stage kidney disease (ESKD). The prevalence of chronic kidney disease is 8%-11% worldwide and 10.8% in South Korea¹. According to the 2020 United States Renal Data System, during 2008-2018, the prevalence of ESKD steadily increased among people aged 65 years or older².

South Korea is the country with the fourth highest ESKD prevalence rate in Asia after Taiwan, Japan, and Singapore. In 2020, the Korean Society of Nephrology reported that the prevalence of ESKD continues to increase and that the elderly (aged 65 years or older) account for 54.6% of these patients (Fig. 1). The mean age of dialysis patients is 65.9 years in 2019, and the mean age of hemodialysis patients (60.5±15.0 years old) is higher than that of peritoneal dialysis patients (56.0±14.8 years old)¹.

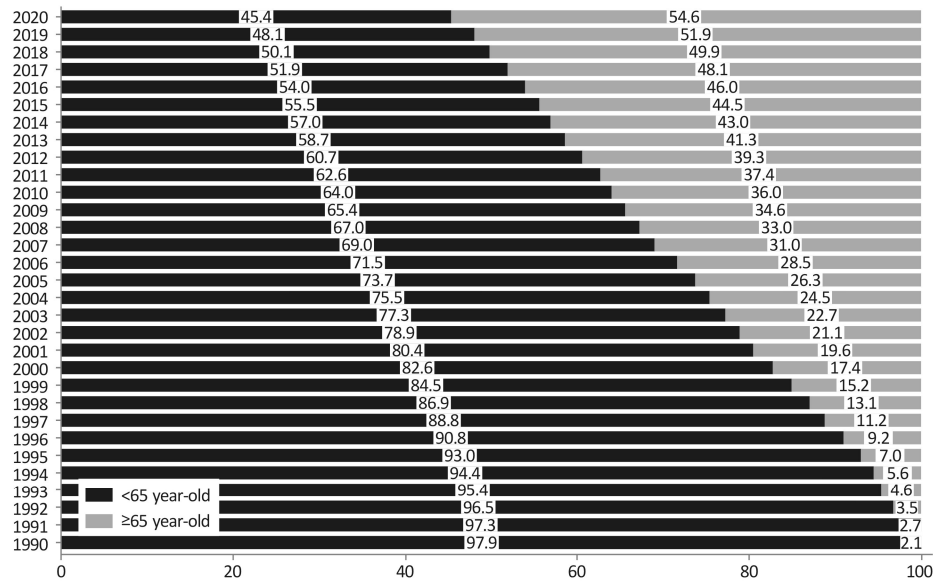


Fig. 1. The prevalence of ESKD among people aged 65 years or older in South Korea was 54.6% in 2020 and has steadily increased since the 1990s. X-axis, age; Y-axis, year (adopted from KORDS, 2020). Abbreviations: KORDS, Korean Renal Data System.

2. Considerations for dialysis in elderly patients with ESKD

All dialysis patients have the highest early mortality rate within 3 months of initiating dialysis, and elderly patients have a higher early mortality rate than others³⁾. Geriatric syndromes such as aging, frailty, functional impairment, and cognitive impairment play a crucial role in the prognosis of elderly hemodialysis patients^{4,5)}. In addition, predicting the prognosis and likelihood of early death before and during dialysis is helpful for determining whether to perform dialysis in elderly patients. In 2018, the Act on Hospice and Palliative Care and Decisions on Life-Sustaining Treatment for Patients at the End of Life (hereinafter referred to as the Act on Decisions on Life-Sustaining Treatment) included hemodialysis as a life-sustaining treatment. Most nephrologists also have positive opinions about withholding or withdrawing dialysis of patients in end-of-life or dying process according to the Act on Decisions on Life-Sustaining Treatment and are trying to establish and apply appropriate guidelines⁶⁾.

3. Choice of renal replacement therapy for elderly patients with ESKD through shared decision-making

The first problem that elderly patients with ESKD encoun-

ter is deciding whether to undergo renal replacement therapy⁷⁾. According to the End Stage Kidney Disease Life-Plan (ESKD Life-Plan) provision in the 2019 K/DOQI guidelines, it is necessary to establish an individualized plan considering patients' conditions, medical/living environment, and preferences (Fig. 2). Patients who choose conservative treatment require treatment of comorbidities, symptom control, and psychological support⁸⁾. In addition, in 2020, the Korean Society of Nephrology reported that Since 2010, the mortality gap between peritoneal dialysis and hemodialysis has gradually narrowed (Fig. 3)⁹⁾ in patients aged 65 years or older¹⁾. Therefore, the choice of a dialysis method according to patients' characteristics and preferences became more important than the mortality rate¹⁰⁾. Shared decision-making (SDM) has been defined as "an approach where clinicians and patients share the best available evidence when faced with the task of making decisions, and where patients are supported to consider options, to achieve informed preferences¹¹⁾". Increasingly many older patients face the need to decide between conservative care and dialysis as a treatment plan for advanced chronic kidney disease. SDM is recommended for preference-sensitive decisions of this type¹²⁾. Although there is debate regarding the survival rate after dialysis, a study reported that the 1-year survival rate

existing evidence regarding survival, symptoms, quality of life, and experiences¹⁵). Before starting renal replacement therapy, careful consideration should be given to ensuring that patients understand the prognosis and the potential benefits and harms of therapy, as well as patients' values, goals, and preferences¹⁸). Since patients and their family members decide whether to undergo dialysis without previously experiencing it, careful SDM with healthcare providers is needed^{5,10}). Moreover, using a standard definition of conservative care will help clinicians to understand conservative care and select it when appropriate for their elderly patients¹⁸).

2) Hemodialysis

Most elderly patients with ESKD choose hemodialysis^{3,19-22}). The formation, maturation, and maintenance of well-functioning vascular access, such as an arteriovenous fistula or arteriovenous graft, are very important in hemodialysis for elderly patients. Since, in particular, dialysis with a catheter can cause higher cardiovascular, infectious, or all-cause mortality in elderly patients, planned surgery for vascular access is essential as the best method that can optimize the success rate and maintain stable survival⁸). Several clinical practice guidelines recommend an arteriovenous fistula over an arteriovenous graft. However, it is unclear whether this recommendation must be applied to elderly patients because of the need to consider urgent hemodialysis, the life expectancy, and the maturation time of arteriovenous fistula in elderly patients²³). Therefore, elderly patients with ESKD who should receive renal replacement therapy according to the new K/DOQI guidelines should also make short- and long-term life-plans and prepare vascular access accordingly⁸). A carefully prepared vascular access for dialysis should undergo minimal intervention for its maturation and maintenance. If dialysis is performed with a central venous catheter, the infection risk must be minimized. Considerations for vascular access include life expectancy and prognosis, patients' health conditions, patients' preferences, vascular condition, possibility of maturation of arteriovenous fistula, the possibility of continuing interventions, and quality of life of patients and families. Ultimately, in an ESKD Life-Plan, individualized vascular access should be

planned according to the individual patient's needs^{24,25}). Furthermore, it is important for healthcare providers to prepare vascular access at the right time and initiate and perform stable dialysis that can improve the survival rate and quality of life of elderly patients. This choice should be made through SDM, with appropriate consideration of the characteristics of the elderly, the speed of progression to ESKD, surgical problems, the policies of dialysis institutions, and the type of dialysis that family members want^{4,8,23,26}). Moreover, The 2019 KDOQI guidelines recommend that nephrologists have extensive experience and insight in coordinating and integrating multidisciplinary vascular access teams based on the patient's ESKD Life-Plan¹⁷).

3) Peritoneal dialysis

According to the Korean Society of Nephrology report in 2020, the number of peritoneal dialysis patients, unlike that of hemodialysis patients, continues to decrease (prevalence of peritoneal dialysis, 2015, 6%; 2016, 5%; 2017 onwards, 4%)¹). This trend is thought to be affected by autonomy, comorbidities, and the performance status of elderly patients with ESKD, as well as economic issues, the level of resource utilization, cultural issues, patients' preferences, late referrals to nephrology, educational level, sex, living alone, and age^{27,28}). The peritoneum does not significantly change due to aging, but in elderly individuals, changes in peritoneal mesothelial cells may occur and they may be vulnerable to inflammation. Diverticulosis, intestinal obstruction, and constipation are common in the elderly, and these conditions can affect the physiology of the peritoneum and worsen the function of a peritoneal catheter. In addition, patients with a history of abdominal surgery are at an elevated risk of adhesions and abdominal wall leaks²⁷). Because most elderly patients with ESKD are immobile due to malnutrition or frailty and have a high risk of cardiovascular disease due to underlying diseases such as hypertension and diabetes, peritoneal dialysis as a maintenance dialysis method for elderly patients with ESKD can be used appropriately.

Therefore, peritoneal dialysis should not be determined according to the physician's preference, and healthcare providers should provide proper and individualized information

so that patients make an unbiased decision²⁸⁾. In addition, when chronic kidney disease has progressed to a severe degree, timely dialysis education is also important because cognitive impairment or uremia can prevent patients from being able to make an appropriate choice. Although the prevalence of peritoneal dialysis is decreasing and its survival rate is slightly less favorable than that of hemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis nevertheless has advantages that distinguish it from hemodialysis. The following considerations shed light on cases where it may be preferable to perform peritoneal dialysis in elderly patients. First, if peritoneal dialysis is used as emergency dialysis²⁹⁾, maintenance peritoneal dialysis becomes more likely. Second, assisted peritoneal dialysis, homecare support programs, and automated peritoneal dialysis can be used³⁰⁾. Third, in the US and Europe, insurance fees for peritoneal dialysis are cheaper than those for hemodialysis. If a separate health-care delivery system and fee system are applied to peritoneal dialysis, the frequency of peritoneal dialysis may increase. Finally, it is important to decide whether to perform peritoneal dialysis on an individualized basis, considering elderly patients' conditions³¹⁾.

4) Kidney transplantation

Kidney transplantation is known as the best treatment for ESKD, with advantages including a prolonged life expectancy, improved quality of life, and reduced opportunity cost compared to dialysis treatment³²⁾. According to the Korean Society of Nephrology report in 2020, the number of patients undergoing transplantation due to ESKD reached 21,153 in South Korea. In particular, the proportion of elderly kidney transplant recipients (aged 60 years or older) increased from 7.4% in 2008 to 18.4% in 2016. According to the Korea Organ Transplantation Registry data from the Korean Society for Transplantation, the 1-year and 5-year patient and allograft survival rates in kidney transplant recipients over the age of 60 were 96.5% 90.4%, 94.8%, and 85.5%, respectively. Due to population aging, the donors and recipients of living donor kidney transplantation are also gradually becoming older. Due to the lack of donor kidneys in deceased donors, the number of patients on the waiting list for brain death donors is rapidly increasing and the waiting period is becoming longer, resulting in an

increase in the recipients' ages¹⁾.

Since elderly patients with ESKD have several conditions, such as malnutrition, chronic inflammation, chronic kidney disease - mineral bone disease, and vascular calcification, before transplantation, their circumstances should be considered when determining kidney transplantation. After transplantation, precautions are necessary to minimize the following problems: decreased muscle mass, bone density, and muscle strength in the upper and lower limbs; increased fatigue; a reduced ability to engage in aerobic activities; malnutrition; sarcopenia; cardiopulmonary dysfunction; and frailty^{33,34)}. Both dialysis recipients themselves and health-care providers should solve social adaptation issues after transplantation through active rehabilitation activities for symptoms occurring post-transplantation^{32,35-37)}. For this, it is necessary for healthcare providers to accurately identify the clinical conditions of elderly patients before transplantation, continue active rehabilitation activities and post-operative management to promote the patients' recovery, and control medications and monitor clinical conditions after discharge³⁴⁻³⁸⁾.

Conclusion

With the aging population and the increase in ESKD in the elderly, clinicians must identify factors affecting the mortality and quality of life of elderly dialysis patients, and through SDM based on close consultation between patients, families, and medical staff, an ESKD Life-Plan should be established.

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Management of Hypertension in Fabry Disease

Su Hyun Kim¹, Soo Jeong Choi²

¹Department of Internal Medicine, Chung-Ang University Gwangmyeong Hospital, Gwangmyeong, Republic of Korea;

²Department of Internal Medicine, Soonchunhyang University College of Medicine, Bucheon, Republic of Korea

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Corresponding Author: Soo Jeong Choi, MD, PhD
Division of Nephrology, Department of Internal Medicine, Soonchunhyang University Bucheon Hospital, Soonchunhyang University College of Medicine, 170 Jomaru-ro, Bucheon 14584, Korea
Tel: +82-32-621-5169; Fax: +82-32-621-5016
E-mail: crystal@schmc.ac.kr

Fabry disease (FD), a rare X-linked lysosomal storage disorder that depletes alpha-galactosidase A (α -GalA), is caused by mutations in the GLA gene. Diminished α -GalA enzyme activity results in the accumulation of Gb3 and lyso-Gb3. The pathophysiology of hypertension in FD is complex and unclear. The storage of Gb3 in arterial endothelial cells and smooth muscle cells is known to produce vascular injury by increasing oxidative stress and inflammatory cytokines as a primary pathophysiological mechanism. In addition, Fabry nephropathy developed, resulting in a decrease in kidney function and contributing to hypertension.

The prevalence of hypertension in patients with FD was between 28.4% and 56%, whereas hypertension in patients with chronic kidney disease ranged between 33% and 79%. A study using 24-hour ambulatory blood pressure monitoring (ABPM) to measure blood pressure (BP) indicated a high prevalence of uncontrolled hypertension in FD. Thus, 24-hour ABPM ought to be considered for FD hypertension assessments.

Appropriate treatment of hypertension is believed to reduce mortality in patients with FD caused by kidney disease, cardiovascular disease, and cerebrovascular disease because hypertension significantly impacts organ damage. Up to 70% of FD patients have been reported to have kidney involvement, and angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors and angiotensin receptor blockers prescribed for proteinuria are recommended as first-line therapy with antihypertensive drugs. In conclusion, hypertension should be controlled appropriately, given the different morbidity and mortality caused by significant organ involvement in FD patients.

Key Words: Fabry disease, Hypertension, Enzyme replacement therapy, Angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors, Angiotensin receptor blockers

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INTRODUCTION

Fabry disease (FD) is a rare multisystemic and X-linked lysosomal storage disease. It is caused by mutations in the galactosidase alpha (GLA) gene, resulting in a deficiency of alpha-galactosidase A (α -GalA) enzyme function¹. The reduced or absent α -GalA activity causes the progressive accumulation of glycosphingolipids, especially globotriaosylceramide (Gb3; also abbreviated as GL3) and the deacylated Gb3 (globotriaosylsphingosine [lyso-Gb3, also lyso-GL3]) in various cell types and organs, including the kidney, heart,

skin, blood vessels, peripheral nerves, and central nervous system. The prevalence of FD ranges between 1:40,000 and 1:117,000²⁻⁴, and the clinical symptoms are nonspecific and highly variable.

FD can be classified into two phenotypes: "classic" and "later-onset, also called non-classic." In the classic phenotype, affected males have a total, or almost total, absence of α -GalA activity, and the symptoms typically appear in childhood or adolescence¹. These symptoms include peripheral neuropathic pain, hypohidrosis, cutaneous angiokeratomas, lenticular and corneal verticillata, gastrointestinal symptoms including abdominal pain and diarrhea, micro-

albuminuria, and proteinuria. As patients age, they may develop serious complications, such as chronic kidney disease, cardiomyopathy, arrhythmias, and cerebrovascular diseases, which can lead to severe morbidity and higher mortality⁵⁻⁷.

Later-onset or non-classic phenotypes of Fabry patients have variable levels of residual α -GalA activity and heterogeneity in clinical presentations. Therefore, the onset of clinical symptoms is typically between the fourth and sixth decades of life; however, they may manifest in childhood with very different symptoms than the classic phenotype. They are also milder than in the case of the classic phenotype. They are frequently limited to a single organ (usually the heart or kidney)^{8,9}. Adult-onset cardiac (cardiomegaly, left ventricular hypertrophy, cardiomyopathy, hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, and myocardial infarction) and renal (end-stage kidney disease) variants are more prevalent¹⁰⁻¹².

Similarly to other X-linked genetic disorders, hemizygous males display more severe clinical symptoms than females. In females, X-linked gene expression is mosaic due to X-chromosome inactivation, which involves the random transcriptional silencing of one X-chromosome in each cell¹. Consequently, based on penetrance and expression, females can exhibit various symptoms ranging from mild to severe.

The primary pathophysiological mechanism of FD is the storage of Gb3 in lysosomes, which causes cellular dysfunction by inhibiting autophagy and initiating apoptosis¹³. Eliminating accumulated Gb3 using enzyme replacement therapy (ERT) was anticipated to prevent disease progression and alleviate organ damage. Despite ERT treatment, advanced FD showed progressive major organ damage. It may be related to a secondary pathway via increased oxidative stress and induce an immunological response by activating the renin-angiotensin system (RAS) through the storage of lyso-Gb3.

Since it is generally accepted that FD is associated with a low prevalence of hypertension, very few studies have been conducted on it. On the other hand, due to the recent publication of studies on hypertension, there is a growing awareness of the significance of treating hypertension. Thus, we will review the prevalence of hypertension in FD patients, its pathophysiological mechanism, the impact of hypertension on organ damage, and therapies through a

review of the literature.

Blood Pressure in Fabry Disease

Patients with FD are known to have significantly lower blood pressure (BP) than the general population¹⁴, despite the high prevalence of heart, kidney, and nervous system diseases associated with high BP. The most plausible explanation is autonomic dysfunction, which includes impaired sweating, reduced saliva and tear production, altered gastrointestinal motility, arrhythmia, and orthostatic hypotension^{15,16}.

Several factors have been proposed as mechanisms of autonomic dysfunction. First, there is evidence of accumulation of glycosphingolipids and lipid-stained inclusions in central autonomic nuclei and peripheral nerves¹⁷. And somatic epidermal and dermal autonomic nerve fiber reductions were observed in skin biopsy¹⁸. FD vasculopathy, including smooth muscle cell hypertrophy with stored glycolipid, also affects autonomic dysfunction by constricting small neural blood vessels¹⁹. Baroreflex-mediated vasoconstriction due to the dysfunction of sympathetic vasomotor fibers in patients with FD is another known mechanism, as reported by Hilz et al.²⁰. In addition, an insufficient increase in heart rate despite physical activity causes exercise intolerance and orthostatic hypotension in advanced stages²¹.

Considering these autonomic dysfunctions, it is controversial whether the definition of hypertension in patients with FD can be used for the general population. The autonomic nervous system primarily regulates BP variability¹⁴. The classification of BP and the definition of hypertension is unchanged from previous European guidelines and is defined as an office systolic BP (SBP) ≥ 140 mmHg and/or diastolic BP (DBP) ≥ 90 mmHg, which is equivalent to a 24-h ambulatory BP monitoring (ABPM) average of $\geq 130/80$ mmHg, or a home BP monitoring average $\geq 135/85$ mmHg²². Considering the characteristics of low BP in patients with FD, it has been reported that even slightly elevated SBP can be associated with organ damage even if BP does not meet the criteria for hypertension²³. BP variability was higher in FD patients compared with controls, while there was a decrease in heart rate variability and more non-dipper in FD¹⁴.

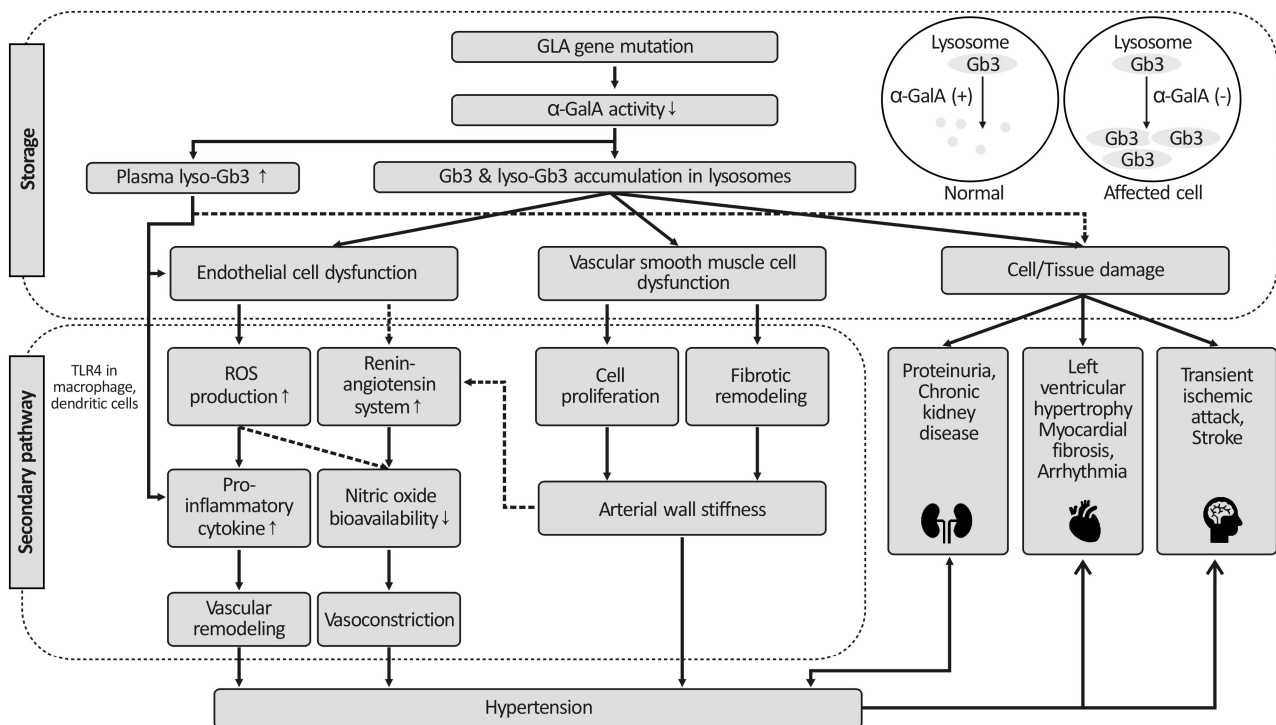


Fig. 1. The proposed pathophysiology of hypertension in Fabry disease. Mutations in the GLA gene reduced alpha-galactosidase A (α -GalA) activity, resulting in the progressive accumulation of Gb3 and lyso-Gb3 in plasma, endothelial cells, and vascular smooth muscle cells, which damages major organ damage. The cellular dysfunction produced by the storage of Gb3 in the lysosome leads to secondary injury, including immunological response through increased reactive oxygen species (ROS) and renin-angiotensin system activation. Chronic kidney disease resulting from FD nephropathy contributes to the development of hypertension. The solid line is a hypothesis based on clinical trials or basic research on Fabry disease. In contrast, the dotted lines reflect an assumed theory based on the mechanism of essential hypertension.

In a recent study by Rossi et al. on outpatient monitoring, 18.8% of 31 patients with FD had increased BP, and three had masked hypertension²⁴⁾.

Pathophysiology of Hypertension

The pathophysiological mechanisms underlying hypertension in FD are poorly understood due to the limited number of clinical and basic investigations on the mechanism of hypertension in FD. The accumulation of Gb3 in arterial endothelial cells and smooth muscle cells is considered the key pathophysiological mechanism for inducing hypertension-related vascular injury (Fig. 1)^{19,25)}.

Essential hypertension is associated with an elevation of reactive oxygen species (ROS), which induce pro-inflammatory cytokines and vascular remodeling²⁶⁾. Gb3 loading into endothelial cells causes intracellular ROS and increases the

expression of cell adhesion molecules²⁷⁾. Increased ROS production eventually triggers an increase in pro-inflammatory cytokines, resulting in vascular remodeling. In a study targeting FD cardiomyopathy, interleukin-6 (IL-6), interleukin-1 β (IL-1 β), tumor necrosis factor- α (TNF- α), and monocyte chemoattractant protein-1 (MCP-1), which is the pro-inflammatory cytokine, were significantly higher than those of the control group, suggesting that pro-inflammatory cytokines affect hypertension in FD²⁸⁾.

FD patients may have a potential relationship between the RAS system and hypertension, as the activation of angiotensin II can reduce the activity of endothelial nitric oxide synthase (eNOS) activity, leading to vasoconstriction and elevated BP, a mechanism also observed in the general population²⁹⁾. Additionally, research by Fujii et al. indicates that Gb3 and angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) are expressed in the same location in the proximal tubules, while Batista

et al. found that α -GalA infusion inhibits ACE activity, leading to a temporary reduction in BP in Fabry patients after ERT^{30,31}. However, the effects were compensated with up-regulated ACE activity and increased plasma angiotensin II two weeks later. Bothou et al. also found a positive correlation between elevated renin and lyso-Gb3 levels in men with FD, while Shu et al. demonstrated that aortic endothelial cells lacking α -GalA had decreased eNOS activity and nitric oxide availability^{32,33}. While these findings suggest a potential role of the RAS system in hypertension development in FD patients, further research is needed to confirm this relationship.

In addition, Gb3 is known to stimulate cell proliferation and fibrosis in smooth muscle cells, leading to inflammation and elevated BP. Storage of lyso-Gb3 within the medial layer of the arteries may also promote smooth muscle cell proliferation, with the fibrotic remodeling of the arterial wall leading to arterial wall stiffness³⁴. Aerts et al. report that lyso-Gb3 dramatically increased the plasma of affected FD patients and tissues of FD mice and induced smooth muscle cell proliferation in vitro³⁴. Barbey et al. showed that plasma from FD could stimulate the proliferation of vascular smooth muscle cells and cardiomyocytes³⁵. The resulting shear stress may increase the expression of angiotensin I and II receptors in endothelial cells, increasing ROS, and decreasing NO synthesis¹⁹. These factors may initiate an inflammatory cascade with pro-thrombotic and pro-inflammatory effects on endothelial cells and vascular smooth muscle cells^{19,36}.

Pinto et al. reported that an immune response causes hypertension in patients with FD, and innate immunity also plays a major role³⁷. The innate immune system recognizes danger signals through pattern recognition receptors, such as toll-like receptor 4 (TLR4), expressed primarily on the surface of macrophages and dendritic cells. Glycolipids such as lyso-Gb3 can bind to TLR4 in FD, which in turn activates the NF- κ B pathway to release pro-inflammatory cytokines and trigger systemic and local inflammatory responses^{38,39}.

As FD nephropathy advances, CKD occurs, contributing to hypertension development. Kidney involvement is already known to be extremely prevalent in FD, and Gb3 deposition in the kidney is a primary cause⁴⁰. In addition, high BP itself contributes to kidney damage; hence, high

BP and kidney damage are tightly linked. In general, untreated patients present three clinical stages of FD nephropathy, depending on their age. In the first stage (infancy and adolescence), there is glomerular hyperfiltration. In the second (adult) stage, it is kidney-related with proteinuria and lipiduria, and in the third stage, severe kidney and cardiovascular complications develop, resulting in hypertension⁴¹.

Hypertension is a progressive disease whose prevalence increases with advancing age. It is also known that the prevalence of hypertension increases with age in FD. In particular, the prevalence of kidney and cardiovascular diseases, which are highly related to hypertension, increases with age, so this effect is thought to have an impact^{42,43}.

Prevalence of Hypertension in Fabry Disease

According to a meta-analysis of the general European population, the prevalence of hypertension was 44.2%⁴⁴. In a study of patients in the United States, the prevalence of hypertension in patients with chronic kidney disease was between 80 and 85 percent⁴⁵. The prevalence of hypertension in patients with FD has been observed to range between 28% and 63.5% (Table 1)^{14,24,40,41,46-51}. In the study by Lenders, hypertension was as high as 63.5%, which is attributed to the fact that the average age was older than in earlier studies, and the group with albuminuria reached 75.0%⁵⁰.

The majority of the research that reported the prevalence of hypertension was based on cross-sectional studies, and because of this, it was not able to adequately estimate the prevalence of hypertension using information such as medical history and the use of antihypertensive medicines. Two studies found that when the BP of FD patients was measured using ABPM, the prevalence of hypertension was 31-40%^{14,24}. Considering that 5% to 41% of the patients had a glomerular filtration rate of less than 60, including other cross-sectional studies, hypertension in patients with FD was lower than in the general population.

Conversely, there is evidence that patients with FD have a high prevalence of uncontrolled hypertension. Kleinert et al. reported that among 391 patients with FD, 57% of males and 47% of females had uncontrolled hypertension when hypertension was defined as SBP \geq 130 mmHg and

Table 1. Prevalence of hypertension in Fabry patients

Author, year	Region	N	Male (%)	Age (year)	Diagnosis of HTN	eGFR	eGFR<60, n (%)	HTN, n (%)	HTN in CKD, n (%)	Kidney involvement, %	CNS involvement, %	Cardiac involvement, %	ERT/Chaperon therapy, %	ACEi/ARBs, %
Dincer, 2022	Turkey	30	53.3	38.1±13.4		91.7±40.8	9 (30%)	12 (40%)	5 (55.6%)	71	35.4	32.3	96.8	35.5
Ferrari, 2021	Argentina	93	44.0	32±16.6	History of HTN	-	38 (41%)	26 (28%)	-	41	-	47	100	-
Rossi, 2021	Europe	32	25.0	50.3±12.4	SBP ≥130 or DBP ≥80 mmHg vis ABPM	-	6 (19%)	10 (31%)	2 (33%)	32.3	65.6	90.6	59.4	21.9
Lenders, 2020	Germany	59	53.0	49±13	History of HTN	-	1 (5%)	33 (63.5%)	-	70.8	-	68	57.6	72.1
Wang, 2020	Taiwan	22	72.7	47 (32.8-56.3)	History of HTN	83.6 (59.8-112.2)	2 (9.1%)	9 (40.9%)	-	-	-	24.7	-	-
Lidove, 2016 (FOS)	Global	2,044	56.0	≥18	History of HTN	-	-	599 (29%)	-	48.9	19.7	66.3	67.2	35.6
Schiffmann, 2009	Global	395	61.0	41.0 (5.0-77.1)	History of HTN	-	77 (19%)	221 (56%)	61 (79%)	26.3	17	58.7	100	16.7
Ortiz, 2008	Global	1,262	46.0	-	SBP ≥130 or DBP ≥80 mmHg vis office BP	81/82 for male and female	255 (20%)	554 (44%)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kleinert, 2006 (FOS)	Global	391	54.0	40 (24, 58)	SBP ≥130 or DBP ≥80 mmHg vis office BP	79 (53, 109)	104 (27%)	205 (52.4%)	70 (67%)	-	-	-	-	24.9
Branton, 2002	USA	105	100.0	38±11	History of HTN	-	-	31 (30%)	-	74.3	-	-	-	19

ABPM, Ambulatory blood pressure monitoring; ACEi, Angiotensin-Converting Enzyme Inhibitors; ARBs, Angiotensin II receptor blockers; FOS, Fabry Outcome Survey registry; HTN, hypertension; CKD, chronic kidney disease

DBP ≥90 mmHg⁵¹). Rossi et al. demonstrated the importance of ABPM by reporting that hypertension was detected in three (9.4%) patients by normal clinic measurements, while increased BP was found in six (18.8%) patients by ambulatory monitoring, which revealed three cases of masked hypertension²⁴).

There may be heterogeneity in the reported data due to differences in study group age and kidney function at baseline. Hypertension prevalence increases with age in Fabry Outcome Survey (57.7% aged ≥75 years; 48.2% aged 65-74; 41.9% aged 50-64; 21.8% aged 18-49)⁴⁷). According to Branton and colleagues, hypertension was not a prominent feature in this population, often not manifesting until patients experienced a decline in kidney function, and they proposed that hypertension is more likely to be essential or secondary to pre-existing kidney disease⁴⁶).

The incidence of hypertension in patients with FD often increases with decreased kidney function. Patients with a glomerular filtration rate of less than 60 mL/min/1.73 m² had higher BP, according to a study by Ortiz et al.⁴⁰). Schiffman et al. also reported that approximately 80% of patients with CKD had hypertension, whereas about 50% had a glomerular filtration rate of ≥60 mL/min/1.73 m²⁴¹). Dincer et al. reported the 24-hour BP determined by ABPM was significantly different between GFR <60 ml/min and greater than 60, while the proportions of patients taking antihyper-

tensive drugs were similar¹⁴).

Many studies show gender does affect hypertension. Ortiz et al. reported no difference between genders in the eGFR <60 and ≥60 groups⁴⁰). In the group under 40 years old, however, there was a substantially higher frequency of hypertension among males (51%) than females (35%; *p*=0.0003) with CKD stages 1 or 2⁴⁰). These results might suggest organ involvement is associated with hypertension rather than gender.

Considering that the BP of FD patients is lower than that of the general population, the prevalence of hypertension is likely to be higher than estimated; therefore, additional research is necessary. In addition, since most studies have diagnosed hypertension by taking a patient's medical history and prescribing medication, tests such as ABPM should be considered to prevent major organ damage and active treatment of hypertension in patients with FD.

Hypertension and Major Organ Damage

The major consequences of hypertension are myocardial infarction, heart failure, stroke, and kidney failure. In the general population, for every 20 mmHg increase in SBP or 10 mmHg increase in DBP, the risk of cardiovascular disease doubles⁵²).

Hypertension contributes to the disease burden of FD,

just as it contributes to the disease burden of many other conditions in the general population. Due to the high prevalence of kidney, cardiac, and neurological diseases in FD, hypertension has detrimental effects on disease progression and prognosis despite the low prevalence of hypertension in patients with FD compared to the general population⁵³.

Fabry nephropathy presents with a wide range of disease severity in males and females, proteinuria is typically a manifestation of podocyte injury, and urinary protein excretion is strongly associated with Fabry nephropathy progression^{40,54}. A high prevalence of uncontrolled BP was reported in patients with FD and deteriorating CKD in the Fabry Outcome Survey Registry and the Fabry Registry^{40,51}. Otiz et al. found SBP was higher with lower eGFR in Fabry patients⁴⁰. Proteinuria in kidney disease is generally recognized as a risk factor for disease progression^{40,55}. These findings suggest that hypertension may contribute to the decline of kidney function.

There is also evidence of an association between hypertension and cardiovascular disease in FD. Cardiovascular disease was the most common cause of death in both genders, accounting for 40% of men and 41.7% of women⁵. Linhart et al. evaluated the cause of death on 113 affected relatives of 714 patients with FD⁵⁶. Cardiovascular mortality rate was most frequent in 41 female, while that was the second cause in 72 men. In a study by Patel et al., hypertension increased the odds of a cardiovascular event (myocardial infarction, heart failure, or heart-related death) by 7.8 in men and 4.5 in women⁵⁷.

Hypertension has been considered the most crucial risk factor for cerebrovascular disease (CVD) in FD⁵⁸. At the Fabry Registry, patients with CVD were more likely than FD patients without CVD to report a history of hypertension, 52.9% versus 20.5%, respectively⁵⁹. A greater proportion of female stroke patients reported a history of hypertension than male stroke patients (32 of 52, 61.5%).

Management of Hypertension

As described above, as few as 30% to as many as 50% or more of FD patients are accompanied by hypertension^{14,24,46-49}. Appropriate treatment of such hypertension contributes to the reduction of mortality due to kidney, cardiovascular, and cerebrovascular diseases in FD patients

and, consequently, may positively affect the disease progression and prognosis of FD, so active hypertension treatment is recommended^{40,51}.

The European Society of Hypertension-European Society of Cardiology guidelines suggest that a target BP in patients with FD with proteinuria >1 g/day should be less than 125/75 mmHg, whereas a target BP in patients with FD with proteinuria of 0.25-1 g/day should be 130/80 mmHg^{60,61}. In addition to ERT, the current treatment guidelines published by Eng et al. emphasize the importance of managing hypertension in patients with kidney disease⁶².

When treating hypertension in patients with FD, it may be beneficial to consider medications that offer organ-protective effects, such as for the kidney, heart, and brain. Medications for hypertension in Fabry patients may include angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors (ACEi), angiotensin II receptor blockers (ARBs), mineralocorticoid receptor antagonists (MRAs), calcium channel blockers (CCBs), or beta-blockers. Additionally, sodium-glucose cotransporter 2 (SGLT2) inhibitors, which have recently emerged as a potential new antihypertensive drug, can also be considered.

ACEi/ARBs are the primary medications prescribed for hypertensive patients with FD. This is because proteinuria is very common in patients with FD, and it is the first-line treatment for proteinuria. Management of proteinuria is a critical feature in preserving kidney function in patients with FD. A consistent antiproteinuric therapy with ACEi or ARBs was shown to decrease the progression of kidney disease in FD^{63,64}. Table 1 shows that ACEi/ARBs were used (16.7-71%) for organ damage in patients with FD.

Monitoring BP while using ACEi/ARBs is essential because sudden hypotension can impair kidney function. Although patients with hypertension were not targeted, Muntze's study reported that kidney function deteriorated after using ACEi/ARBs⁶⁵. They said that migalastat was used as a treatment drug, and the left ventricular mass index significantly decreased in 14 patients while eGFR significantly deteriorated. The authors observed a significant correlation between the initiation of ACEi and SBP drop below 120, leading to a higher risk of kidney function deterioration. Hence, when BP falls below SBP 120 during the initiation of antihypertensive medications like ACEi, it is crucial to closely monitor BP to prevent any potential kidney function decline.

CCBs may be considered as a potential treatment option for hypertension in FD, but evidence for their use is lacking⁶⁶. However, chest pain is a common symptom in FD patients, with up to 60% of hemizygous males and heterozygous females experiencing it⁶⁷. For treating angina and left ventricular outflow tract obstruction, CCBs like verapamil and diltiazem should be considered⁶⁸.

Beta-blockers with high cardiac selectivity are recommended for patients with angina pectoris, myocardial infarction, or tachycardia^{69,70}. But when prescribing beta-blockers to patients with FD, caution is necessary due to the increased risk of bradyarrhythmias and chronotropic incompetence⁷¹. A high prevalence of symptomatic heart failure (47 out of 116 patients, 69 classic types and 47 late-onset) was reported in FD patients by Rob et al., with beta-blockers being the most frequently used medication (51%), followed by ACEi (43%), diuretics (28%), ARBs (15%), and MRAs (8.5%)⁷².

Steroidal and non-steroidal MRAs are recommended for their kidney protective effects, which include reducing proteinuria, as well as their cardioprotective effects in patients with heart failure^{69,73,74}. However, it should be noted that there are risks of hyperkalemia or acute kidney injury, so caution must be taken when administering these medications as part of hypertension treatment.

SGLT2 inhibitors have demonstrated the potential to lower BP, suggesting their use as new antihypertensive drugs⁷⁵. Even in patients with FD, SGLT2 inhibitors, similar to RAS blockade, may provide optimal kidney protection and control of systemic and intrarenal BP⁷⁶. While recent findings suggest no risk of acute kidney injury associated with SGLT2 inhibitors, caution should still be exercised when using these drugs in patients with altered kidney function due to volume depletion⁷⁷. Although there are no direct study results on the effect of SGLT2 inhibitors on FD, clinical studies are scheduled to be conducted and results are anticipated⁷⁸.

Since a high-sodium diet can reduce the effectiveness of ACEi/ARBs⁷⁹ and is associated with an increased risk of progression to end-stage kidney disease in patients with proteinuria⁸⁰, a low-sodium diet is strongly recommended for FD patients with proteinuria⁸¹.

The FD-specific current treatments are ERT and chaper-

one therapy, which reduce intracellular Gb3 accumulation. ERT involves exogenous supplementation of α -GalA enzymes such as Fabrazyme and Replagal. Migalastat hydrochloride is an oral pharmacological chaperone that corrects the misfolded endogenous α -GalA and promotes the transport of α -GalA into lysosomes. Other future therapies, such as matrix reduction therapy, mRNA-based therapy, and gene therapy, are under development⁸¹.

Two studies found that ERT treatment improved hypertension and decreased proteinuria^{82,83}. However, it is difficult to fully explain the effect of ERT alone, given that the patients who participated in these studies were also getting ACEi or ARBs medication. ACEi and ARBs are routinely used to protect the kidneys in FD. There are reports that ERT can reduce inflammation by regulating the immune system. FD leads to the activation of the pro-inflammatory pathway associated with hypertension. ERT may modulate the immune system to reduce the level of inflammation.

In conclusion, the improved treatment of hypertension has probably contributed to the decline in kidney and cardiovascular disease-related mortality in FD patients. All Fabry patients should have adequate control over their BP. As indicated previously, because of uncontrolled hypertension, 24-hour BP measurements and oral medications such as ACEi/ARBs should be considered while monitoring BP.

Conflict of Interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare

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Post-Hypercapnic Alkalosis: A Brief Review

Yongjin Yi, MD, MPH

Division of Nephrology, Department of Internal Medicine, Dankook University Hospital, Dankook University College of Medicine, Cheonan, Republic of Korea

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Corresponding Author: Yongjin Yi, MD, MPH
Department of Nephrology, Department of Internal Medicine, Dankook University College of Medicine 119, Dandae-ro, Dongnam-gu, Cheonan-si, Chungcheongnam-do 31116, Korea
Tel: +82-41-550-3066; Fax: +82-41-550-6033
E-mail: yongjin.neph@gmail.com

Metabolic alkalosis is a common acid-base imbalance frequently observed in intensive care unit (ICU) patients and is associated with increased mortality. Post-hypercapnic alkalosis (PHA) is a type of metabolic alkalosis caused by sustained high serum bicarbonate levels following a rapid resolution of hypoventilation in patients with chronic hypercapnia due to prolonged respiratory disturbance. Common causes of chronic hypercapnia include chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), central nervous system disorders, neuromuscular disorders, and narcotic abuse. Rapid correction of hypercapnia through hyperventilation leads to a swift normalization of $p\text{CO}_2$, which lacks renal compensation, consequently causing an increase in plasma HCO_3^- levels and severe metabolic alkalosis. Most of PHA occurs in the ICU setting requiring mechanical ventilation and can progress severe alkalemia due to secondary mineralocorticoid excess from volume depletion or decreased HCO_3^- excretion from decreased glomerular filtration rate and increased proximal tubular reabsorption. PHA is associated with increased ICU stay, ventilator dependency, and mortality. Acetazolamide, a carbonic anhydrase inhibitor, has been utilized for managing PHA by inducing alkaline diuresis and reducing tubular reabsorption of bicarbonate. While acetazolamide effectively improves alkalemia, its impact on hard outcomes may be limited by factors such as patient complexity, co-administered medications, and underlying conditions contributing to alkalosis.

Key Words: Metabolic alkalosis, Hypercapnia, Hyperventilation, Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, Carbonic anhydrase

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INTRODUCTION

Metabolic alkalosis is a prevalent acid-base imbalance frequently observed in patients admitted to intensive care unit (ICU). Severe alkalosis is related with clinical manifestations such as hypoventilation, neurological symptoms, and diminished systemic oxygenation¹⁾. In an observational investigation involving 409 patients, those presenting alkalemia with pH levels greater than 7.48 were identified to have a 27.9% mortality rate. Within the group, patients with a pH greater than 7.60 exhibited a significantly increased mortality rate of 48.5%²⁾.

In ICU patients, contraction of the extracellular fluid (ECF)

due to vomiting, nasogastric suctioning or diuretic treatment can cause chloride-responsive metabolic alkalosis³⁾. Besides metabolic alkalosis caused by volume depletion, post-hypercapnic alkalosis (PHA), a form of compensated metabolic alkalosis caused by chronic hypercapnia due to respiratory insufficiency, is relatively common in specific clinical situations. This review aims to offer a comprehensive overview of PHA by examining a case presentation and discussing the pathophysiology, epidemiology, and management, with a focus on the effects of acetazolamide treatment.

Case Presentation

An 84-year-old male presented to the emergency depart-

ment with a complaint of decreased consciousness that occurred 1 hour prior to his visit. He was hospitalized 4 years ago for an event of generalized tonic-clonic seizure and was also diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), hypertension, dilated cardiomyopathy, atrial fibrillation and was prescribed azilsartan 40 mg, amlodipine 5 mg, apixaban 2.5 mg twice daily, valproate 300 mg twice daily, levetiracetam 1,000 mg twice daily, doxofylline 400 mg twice daily, and a beclomethasone/formoterol inhaler 100/6 µg. The patient recently experienced a loss of appetite and poor adherence to his prescribed medications, including anti-epileptic drugs. A point-of-care test revealed a positive result for the COVID-19 PCR. The physical examination showed a blood pressure of 120/92 mmHg, pulse rate of 68 beats/min, respiratory rate of 19 breaths/min, temperature of 36.6°C, and a Glasgow coma scale (GCS) score of E3V4M5. Skin turgor was mildly reduced. Arterial blood gas analysis (ABGA) at admission demonstrated a pH of 7.37, pCO₂ of 51.8 mmHg, pO₂ of 52.2 mmHg, and HCO₃⁻ of 30.0 mmol/L. Biochemistry results included Na at 137 mmol/L, K at 5.2 mmol/L, Cl at 101 mmol/L, BUN/creatinine (Cr) at 18.0/0.87 mg/dL, N-terminal pro-B-type natriuretic peptide at 536.0 pg/mL, and C-reactive protein at 0.57 mg/dL.

The patient was treated for an acute exacerbation of COPD and congestive heart failure using 30 mg of methylprednisolone and intravenous furosemide. On the second day of hospitalization, the patient's mental status declined from confusion to drowsiness, with a GCS score of E3V3M4. ABGA at this time revealed pH 7.40, PaCO₂ 60 mmHg, PaO₂ 101 mmHg, and HCO₃⁻ 37.1 mmol/L. The EEG displayed periodic spike waveforms.

On the third day of hospitalization, the patient's level of consciousness further decreased to stupor, and hypoxia worsened. Consequently, tracheal intubation and mechanical ventilation therapy were performed. The ABGA was pH 7.40, pCO₂ 60 mmHg, pO₂ 47 mmHg, and HCO₃⁻ 37.2 mmol/L. Six hours after initiating mechanical ventilation, the ABGA showed pH 7.44, pCO₂ 51 mmHg, pO₂ 101 mmHg, and HCO₃⁻ 34.6 mmol/L. Following 48 hours of continuous ventilation therapy, the ABGA indicated pH 7.60, pCO₂ 28 mmHg, pO₂ 105 mmHg, and HCO₃⁻ 27.5 mmol/L, suggesting the presence of respiratory and metabolic alkalosis. Serum biochemistry results included Na at 144 mmol/L, K at 4.7 mmol/L,

Cl at 101 mmol/L, BUN/creatinine (Cr) at 26.0/0.65 mg/dL.

In the present case, the patient was referred to a nephrologist on tenth day of hospitalization, seven days after developing metabolic alkalemia. The patient's ABGA results were pH 7.55, pCO₂ 28 mmHg, pO₂ 123 mmHg, and HCO₃⁻ 24.5 mmol/L. After being diagnosed with PHA, the patient's pCO₂ was brought back toward normal range by allowing hypercapnia, and the furosemide dose was adjusted to maintain a euvolemic status. The day following PHA treatment, the ABGA results were pH 7.46, pCO₂ 38 mmHg, pO₂ 83 mmHg, and HCO₃⁻ 27.0 mmol/L.

On hospital day 13, the patient developed new-onset aspiration pneumonia and hypercapnia, which were managed by administering antibiotics and methylprednisolone at a dosage of 0.5 mg/kg/day. On day 14, the ABGA results indicated pH 7.41, pCO₂ 60 mmHg, pO₂ 104 mmHg, and HCO₃⁻ 38.0 mmol/L, with an electrolyte panel showing Na⁺ 143 mmol/L, K⁺ 3.5 mmol/L, Cl⁻ 105 mmol/L, and a urine Cl level of 45 mmol/L. These findings suggested concomitant alkalosis that might occurred by secondary mineralocorticoid excess by administration of methylprednisolone and furosemide. Consequently, spironolactone was administered at a dose of 12.5 mg twice daily. The alkalosis subsequently corrected; however, the patient died due to the progression of pneumonia at hospital day 19.

Case Summary

The diagnosis of the presented case is PHA due to rapid correction of respiratory acidosis. PHA is an acid-base disturbance that occurs in patients with chronic hypercapnic respiratory failure when rapid hyperventilation (e.g., mechanical ventilation, non-invasive ventilation), results in a rapid correction of PaCO₂ that is not accompanied by sufficient reversal of renal HCO₃⁻ reabsorption, resulting in metabolic alkalosis. PHA frequently occurs in acute, intensive care settings, often accompanying rapid hyperventilation therapy. The complexity of patient's condition can lead to misidentification of other causative factors for metabolic alkalosis, resulting in delayed accurate diagnosis and appropriate management. The presented case illustrated a patient with multiple comorbidities such as epilepsy, COPD, and heart failure, experienced a prolonged mechanical ven-

tilation therapy due to the delayed identification of PHA resulting from hyperventilation.

Pathophysiology of PHA

Chronic hypercapnia due to respiratory insufficiency can be caused by various conditions, including COPD, central nervous system disorders, neuromuscular disorders, and narcotic abuse. When chronic hypercapnia and respiratory acidemia develops, patients undergo a renal compensation as bicarbonate reabsorption resulting in an increase in plasma HCO_3^- and amelioration of the acidemia⁴. The retention of plasma sodium bicarbonate (NaHCO_3) increases effective arterial blood volume, leading to enhanced sodium chloride (NaCl) excretion. In this context, euolemia is sustained by high total ECF NaHCO_3 and low total ECF NaCl .

Swift correction of hypercapnia subsequently results in primary metabolic alkalosis due to elevated plasma HCO_3^- levels and normal pCO_2 . The kidneys then attempt to rectify the alkalosis by excreting HCO_3^- , accompanied by the excretion of sodium and potassium, the relative proportions of which are determined by aldosterone levels. If the patient has a low NaCl intake, which is common in this situation, bicarbonate excretion will cease, leading to a persistent metabolic alkalosis maintained by volume contraction and hypokalemia. Raising the total ECF NaCl can enhance effective arterial blood volume, rectifying metabolic alkalosis. It is crucial to consider that these patients often use diuretics, which can exacerbate volume depletion and play a role in the creation and persistence of metabolic alkalosis^{1,5}.

Epidemiology of PHA

COPD is known to be a common cause of chronic hypercapnia. In a study conducted by Dreher et al. that examined the prevalence of chronic hypercapnia among 231 patients diagnosed with Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD) stage 3 or 4 COPD, the researchers discovered that 25% of the patients had PaCO_2 levels exceeding 45 mmHg, while 9% exhibited hypercapnia with levels exceeding 50 mmHg⁶.

There is limited evidence regarding the frequency of PHA

following hyperventilation therapy. In a study conducted by Banga et al., of 84 patients experiencing acute exacerbation of COPD with CO_2 retention, 17 patients (20%) exhibited alkalemia as confirmed by ABGA with a pH of 7.45 or higher, 72 hours after receiving mechanical ventilator therapy. The group of patients with PHA experienced longer days of ICU stay and ventilator dependency⁷.

Diagnosis and Management of PHA

PHA is a potential complication from hyperventilation therapy in patients with underlying chronic hypercapnic respiratory failure. This condition can result from various underlying disorders, such as COPD, neuromuscular disorders, central nervous system depression, or chronic narcotic abuse. Patients with chronic hypercapnia, characterized by a pCO_2 greater than normal value of 40 mmHg, often maintain a normal blood pH of approximately 7.40 due to renal compensation. However, when an additional acute respiratory failure event, such as an acute infection, occurs, the pCO_2 may further increase, leading to additional acute respiratory acidosis. In these clinical situations, the correction of hypoventilation through mechanical or non-invasive ventilation can result in uncompensated metabolic alkalosis. This occurs due to the persistence of the underlying pathophysiology associated with hypercapnic metabolic alkalosis, which leads to severe alkalemia with a pH greater than 7.50-7.60. This results from the coexistence of mixed metabolic alkalosis and respiratory acidosis⁸. The primary goal in treating metabolic alkalosis is to address the underlying condition. Upon diagnosing post-hypercapnic alkalosis (PHA), the presence of various co-existing conditions can complicate the correction of metabolic alkalosis. ECF deficits induced by diuretics or gastrointestinal loss, the use of steroids with mineralocorticoid effects, and electrolyte imbalances such as potassium and magnesium also can contribute to alkalosis, potentially delaying the diagnosis of PHA and impeding effective treatment^{3,9}.

Carbonic anhydrase inhibitor is a class of medications that impede bicarbonate reabsorption in the proximal tubule by inhibiting the activity of the enzyme carbonic anhydrase. Acetazolamide has been used in the management of metabolic alkalosis, by inducing alkaline diuresis

Table 1. A summary of studies on acetazolamide treatment in patients with respiratory failure and metabolic alkalosis

Author (year)	Study design	Target group	Intervention	Study participants	Major outcomes	Results
Faisy et al. (2016) ¹¹⁾	Randomized, double blind, placebo controlled, multicenter trial	Patients with COPD requires IMV less than 24 h with MA, defined as a pH \geq 7.35 and HCO ₃ ⁻ >26 mmol/L	ACET 500 or 1,000 mg (in case with furosemide) twice daily or placebo	ACET group, N=187 Placebo group, N=193	Duration of IMV Duration of ICU stay ICU Mortality Change of HCO ₃ ⁻	Median 136.5 vs 163 h, difference -16.0 h (95% CI, -36.5, 4.0) Median 10 vs 10 d Difference -2.1 d (95% CI, -6.1, 1.9) 11.7% vs 13.4% (p-value, 0.61) Median -0.3 vs 0.3 meq/L Difference -0.8 meq/L (95% CI, -1.2, -0.5)
Rialp et al. (2017) ¹²⁾	Randomized, double blind, placebo controlled, multicenter trial	Patients with COPD or OHS on IMV during less than 72 h with MA, defined as a pH > 7.35 and HCO ₃ ⁻ >28 mmol/L	ACET 500 mg once daily or placebo when 7 AM HCO ₃ ⁻ >26 mmol/L	ACET group, N=24 Placebo group N=23	Duration of IMV Duration of ICU stay Hospital mortality HCO ₃ ⁻ at day 3	Median 4.9 vs 7.2 d (p-value, 0.30) Median 8.5 vs 11 d (p-value, 0.19) 16% vs 9% (p-value, 0.41) Median 30 vs 34 meq/L (p-value <0.001)
Gulsvik et al. (2013) ¹³⁾	Randomized, double blind, placebo-controlled trial	Patients with respiratory failure by pulmonary disease (PaO ₂ \leq 8 kPa and/or PaCO ₂ \geq 7 kPa) with BE of 8 meq/L	ACET 250 mg three times daily or placebo for 5 days	ACET group, N=35 Placebo group, N=35	Change of pO ₂ Change of pCO ₂ Change of pH Change of HCO ₃ ⁻	Mean 1.41 vs 0.81 kPa, difference 0.55 kPa (95% CI, -0.03, 1.06) Mean -0.29 vs -0.45 kPa, difference 0.19 kPa (95%CI, -0.25, 0.64) Mean -0.087 vs -0.084, difference -0.084 (95% CI, -0.102, -0.067) Mean -8.62 vs -2.16 meq/L, difference -6.31 meq/L (95% CI, -7.77, -4.86)
Vos et al. (1994) ¹⁴⁾	Randomized, double blind, placebo-controlled trial	Patients with COPD and hypoxemia of pO ₂ \leq 8.5 kPa	ACET 250 mg twice daily or placebo for 2 days with O ₂ therapy via nasal cannula	ACET group, N=17 Placebo group, N=18	Change of pO ₂ Change of pCO ₂ Change of pH Change of HCO ₃ ⁻	Mean 1.9 vs 0.4 kPa (p-value <0.05) Mean -0.5 vs 0.3 kPa (p-value <0.05) Mean -0.07 vs -0.01 (p-value <0.05) Mean -6.7 vs 0.3 meq/L (p-value <0.05)

COPD, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; IMV, invasive mechanical ventilation; MA, metabolic alkalosis; ACET, acetazolamide; BE, base excess.

by reducing tubular reabsorption of bicarbonate and inhibiting distal tubule secretion of hydrogen ions. After hours of acetazolamide administration, urinary bicarbonate loss occurs, leading to a decrease in serum bicarbonate levels. This reduction is typically a 4-6 mM decrease within 24 hours, accompanied by a fall in arterial pH of approximately 0.05-0.1 units. If there were no mechanical limitation to the increase of lung ventilation, the pCO₂ would decrease by approximately 5-6 mmHg due to the respiratory response¹⁰⁾.

Several clinical trials have investigated the use of acetazolamide for the reversal of alkalosis in patients with prolonged PHA. While some studies have focused on comparing changes in pH and HCO₃⁻, a biochemical marker related to alkalosis, others, such as the study conducted by Faisy et al. and the study by Rialp et al., have examined outcome as duration of mechanical ventilation, and mortality in larger number of patient cohorts through randomized, placebo-controlled trials¹¹⁻¹⁴⁾.

Based on the results of the studies reviewed, 250 to 500 mg PO or IV acetazolamide would be appropriate as first-line treatment in patients with PHA. The dose of acetazolamide should be adjusted, ranging from 250 to 500 mg

once or twice daily, depending on response to therapy. However, dose adjustments are required when there is renal function impairment, as the drug is eliminated by the kidneys. Pharmacokinetic studies of acetazolamide have shown that serum acetazolamide concentrations are elevated in patients with decreased renal function or dialysis¹⁵⁻¹⁷⁾. In patients with decreased renal function, CNS toxicity or acidosis may occur due to the accumulation of acetazolamide, and aplastic anemia, agranulocytosis or anaphylaxis may occur in a non-dose-dependent manner¹⁸⁻²⁰⁾. In these patients, a dose of 125 mg to 250 mg of acetazolamide would be appropriate.

Table 1 provides an overview of the clinical trials conducted on PHA patients. In all studies, acetazolamide demonstrated a significant improvement in base excess. In the largest study involving 380 COPD patients received mechanical ventilation therapy, acetazolamide administration resulted in a 16-hour decrease in the duration of mechanical ventilation compared to placebo. However, the difference did not reach statistical significance (95% CI, -36.5 to 4.0 h; p=0.17). Furthermore, acetazolamide therapy did not significantly reduce the duration of hospital stay or decrease mortality¹¹⁾. Rialp et al. compared the effectiveness of ace-

tazolamide 500 mg once daily versus placebo in patients with obesity hypoventilation syndrome (OHS) and COPD undergoing invasive mechanical ventilation therapy. In the randomized controlled trial, which included a total of 47 patients, acetazolamide did not reduce the duration of ventilator therapy or ICU stay and showed no effect on mortality¹². Two other smaller studies examined changes in blood gas analysis profiles between acetazolamide and placebo in patients with COPD and chronic respiratory failure. In both studies, the results showed that acetazolamide improved alkalemia^{13,14}.

Although acetazolamide effectively improves alkalemia in patients with PHA, its impact on hard outcomes, such as duration of mechanical ventilation, length of stay, and mortality, may be limited by factors like patient complexity and co-administered medications. For example, loop diuretics and corticosteroids can interfere with acetazolamide's pharmacodynamics and reduce its ability of bicarbonate excretion. When these drugs are being co-administered, a higher dose of acetazolamide (500 to 1,000 mg twice daily) may be appropriate to achieve the therapeutic effect²¹. Furthermore, diuretics contribute to chloride-responsive metabolic alkalosis via volume depletion, and mineralocorticoids result in hypokalemia and augmented ammonium excretion and bicarbonate reabsorption in the distal tubule. In such situations, acetazolamide's effectiveness in reversing alkalosis may be diminished³.

CONCLUSION

PHA is one of the common causes of alkalosis in the process of treating respiratory failure in patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Not only PHA due to rapid correction of compensated hypercapnia, but also diuretic-induced alkalosis or mineralocorticoid excess that commonly occurring in intensive care units can be worsen severe alkalosis.

Critically ill patients with PHA are at increased risk for delayed weaning from mechanical ventilation and mortality. Therefore, prevention, monitoring, and appropriate treatment of alkalosis are essential in acutely deteriorated patients with chronic hypercapnia due to respiratory diseases.

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Understanding and Treatment Strategies of Hypertension and Hyperkalemia in Chronic Kidney Disease

Sang Min Jo

Department of Internal Medicine, Kangbuk Samsung Hospital, Sungkyunkwan University School of Medicine, Seoul, Republic of Korea

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Corresponding Author: Sang Min Jo, MD
Department of Internal Medicine, Kangbuk Samsung Hospital, Sungkyunkwan University School of Medicine, 29 Saemunan-ro, Jongno-gu, Seoul, Korea
Tel: +82-2-2001-2599; Fax: +82-2-2001-2601
E-mail: goodfamily88888@gmail.com

Hypertension and potassium imbalance are commonly observed in chronic kidney disease (CKD) patients. The development of hypertension would be related to several mechanisms. Hypertension is related to body mass index, dietary salt intake, and volume overload and is treated with antihypertensives. In CKD patients, managing hypertension can provide important effects that can slow the progression of CKD or reduce complications associated with reduced glomerular filtration rate. The prevalence of hyperkalemia and hypokalemia in CKD patients was similar at 15-20% and 15-18%, respectively, but more attention needs to be paid to treating and preventing hyperkalemia, which is related to a higher mortality rate, than hypokalemia. Hyperkalemia is prevalent in CKD due to impaired potassium excretion. Serum potassium level is affected by renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system inhibitors and diuretics and dietary potassium intake and can be managed by potassium restriction dietary, optimized renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system inhibitor, sodium polystyrene sulfonate, patiromer, and hemodialysis. This review discussed strategies to mitigate and care for the risk of hypertension and hyperkalemia in CKD patients.

Key Words: Chronic kidney disease, Hypertension, Hyperkalemia, Renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system

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INTRODUCTION

Hypertension is commonly observed in patients with chronic kidney disease (CKD)¹, and its prevalence varies from 60% to 90%, depending on the stage and cause of CKD². In CKD, the hypertension mechanisms include sympathetic overactivity, volume overload, endothelial dysfunction, salt retention, and changes in the hormonal system (e.g., increased activity renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system [RAAS]) regulating blood pressure (BP)^{2,3}.

In addition, serum potassium abnormalities are also commonly observed in CKD patients. In CKD, the severity of CKD, excessive dietary potassium intake, and the use of drugs such as angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors, angiotensin receptor blockers, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, and potassium-sparing diuretics intake affect serum

potassium concentration^{4,5,6}. Increased renal and colonic excretion balance potassium until the very late stage of CKD, although hyperkalemia may also occur in the early stage of CKD in patients with hyporeninemia and hypoaldosteronism.

Proper management of hypertension and hyperkalemia in CKD patients may deliver important points for the prognostic management of patients. This article reviews the management strategies to mitigate the risk of hypertension and hyperkalemia for CKD patients.

Controversies of the proper target of blood pressure in CKD management

Up to now, the optimal BP level for hypertension in CKD is still controversial⁷⁻¹¹ since several reasons exist, such as various targets in each guideline, changing targets, and in-

Table 1. Recommended guidelines of blood pressure target for patients with diabetic chronic kidney disease (CKD) and non-diabetic CKD

		KDIGO (2012) ⁹⁴⁾	AHA/ACG (2017) ⁷⁾	ESH/ESC (2018) ⁸⁾	KSH (2018) ⁹⁵⁾	KSH (2022) ⁹⁶⁾
Non-diabetic CKD	No albuminuria	<140/90	<130/80	130-139/70-79	<140/90	<140/90 (I/A)
	Albuminuria*	<130/80	<130/80	130-139/70-79	<130/80	<130/80 (IIa/B)
Diabetic CKD	No albuminuria	<140/90	<130/80	130-139/70-79	<140/90	<130/80 (IIb/C)
	Albuminuria*	<130/80	<130/80	130-139/70-79	<130/80	
Class/level of recommendation		IB/IIA for the presence/absence of albuminuria	IB for the SBP and IC for the DBP target	1A/IIaB for the SBP/DBP target	-	Expert opinion considering the condition of each patient

CKD, chronic kidney disease; SBP, systolic blood pressure; DBP, diastolic blood pressure; KDIGO, Kidney Disease Improving Global Outcomes; AHA/ACG, American Heart Association/American College of Cardiology; ESH/ESC, European Society of Hypertension/European Society of Cardiology; KSH, Korean Society of Hypertension.

*Albuminuria indicates urinary albumin excretion ≥ 30 mg/24h or equivalent⁹⁾.

sufficient evidence in CKD patients (Table 1).

The Kidney Disease Improving Global Outcomes guidelines recommended a target of 130/80 mmHg only for patients with albuminuric CKD in 2012, whereas the 2013 European Society of Hypertension/European Society of Cardiology (ESH/ESC) recommended a BP target of 140/90 mmHg for CKD, regardless of albuminuria. In 2015, the Systolic Blood Pressure Intervention Trial (SPRINT) was prematurely discontinued due to the interim analysis results showing that the group with a target of 120 mmHg systolic BPs had a 25% lower risk of cardiovascular disease and a 27% lower risk of all-cause mortality than those of 140 mmHg. Subsequently, the American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association guidelines committee selected the systolic BP target as 130 mmHg, an intensive target in the SPRINT rather than 120 mmHg^{12,13)}. This selected systolic BP target included concerns about SPRINT application to a broader population and considerations related to SPRINT's highly automated BP measurements, which on average, may be lower than routine clinic measurements. In 2018, for CKD patients, the ESH/ESC guidelines recommended a systolic blood pressure of 130 to 139 mmHg and diastolic blood pressure of 70 to 79 mmHg⁸⁾. A previous study using the data from the Irbesartan in Diabetic Nephropathy Trial indicated decreasing cardiovascular mortality and heart fail-

ure with progressively lower achieved systolic BPs to 120 mmHg¹⁴⁾. Another study involving over 70,000 veterans with eGFR < 60 ml/min/m² and uncontrolled hypertension demonstrated a mortality hazard ratio was about 1.7 between the veteran groups with systolic BPs less than 120 mmHg and 120 to 139 mmHg¹⁵⁾. Although these results show lower risks of death and cardiovascular events in people with lower than higher systolic BPs, it will be cautioned that these situations do not necessarily indicate the treatment of hypertension to the same values reduces risks proportionately.

Strategic approaches to hypertension management in CKD

Control of obesity

Obesity is a risk factor for hypertension and the progression of CKD¹⁶⁻¹⁸⁾. Obesity increases arterial blood pressure by causing excessive renal sodium reabsorption, renal pressure natriuresis, and extracellular fluid volume expansion^{19,20)}. Increased blood pressure and GFR offset increased renal sodium reabsorption, maintaining sodium balance despite high arterial pressure and renal pressure natriuresis. However, chronically elevated blood pressure, renal vasodilation, and glomerular hyperfiltration may affect renal damage. These phenomena further impair renal pressure

natriuresis and exacerbate hypertension and renal impairment²¹.

The results that weight gain increases blood pressure in the relationship between hypertension and obesity are supported by various studies. Population studies have shown that blood pressure is strongly related to anthropometric indicators of obesity, such as waist circumference, waist-to-hip ratio, or body mass index (BMI)^{22,23}. A strong relationship between overweight and hypertension has been observed in diverse populations worldwide^{23,24}. Thus, excess weight gain is a good predictor of future hypertension development. In a previous study²⁵, 63 patients with biopsy-proven, obesity-related glomerulopathy participated weight loss program, including diet and exercise. After two years, these patients resulted in a reduction in blood pressure and dyslipidemia, 51% of proteinuria, and 9.2% of BMI. Moreover, a systematic review showed that nonsurgical weight reduction interventions in a small, short-term study of CKD patients reduced proteinuria and BP and seemed to prevent further decline in renal function²⁶. The results among three studies with 66 patients also indicated that nonsurgical interventions significantly decreased systolic BP at the end of the study period (95% CI 14.23 to 3.74; $p < 0.001$)²⁷⁻²⁹. In a previous study of 112 obese patients (mean eGFR of 32 ml/min/1.73m²) with CKD, 22% or more of the participants lost 10% or more of their body weights within 24 months, and systolic BP was also significantly reduced³⁰. However, even the researchers of the previous study indicated a limitation in generalizing the results because more than half of the subjects were dialysis patients and were in a specific situation where they could receive medical advice or checkups on regular weight control. Several results have shown a positive effect of weight reduction, but data on weight loss intervention and effects on BP and renal function in CKD patients are still limited. Therefore, it is necessary to proceed with more research efforts on CKD patients' safety and prognosis through appropriate weight reduction.

Dietary salt intake reduction

In a previous study, the interaction between dietary salt intake and RAAS blockade was evaluated in CKD patients,

and the effect of dietary sodium intake was also assessed through 24-hour urine sodium excretion³¹. The results of dietary sodium intake showed an apparent decrease in 24-hour urine albumin to creatinine ratio, and systolic BP was most significant in those with the lowest baseline urinary sodium to creatinine ratio.

Reduction of excessive body water

Volume overload accompanying salt retention in CKD patients is a significant cause of hypertension, and body composition can be measured using bioimpedance spectroscopy (BIS) to evaluate the volume status of dialysis patients^{32,33}. Mitsides et al. assessed fluid status in CKD patients to evaluate the accuracies of BIS outputs, which may vary with changing tissue ionic sodium concentration (Na⁺)³⁴. Ten healthy control and 20 CKD patients participated, and the extracellular and intracellular resistance, tissue capacitance, extracellular and total body water were measured using BIS. BIS-derived volumes were 0.4±0.9 L (control group) and 0.5±1.9 L (CKD group) without significance ($p=0.13$). However, the CKD group showed significantly higher Na⁺ (25.3±7.4 mmol/L) than the control group (21.2±3.0 mmol/L, $p=0.04$). The extracellular resistance in the CKD group (609±74.3 Ohms) was significantly lower than the control group (693±93.6 Ohms, $p=0.01$), and intracellular resistance and capacitance did not vary. Moreover, Na⁺ showed a significant inverse linear relationship to extracellular resistance ($r=-0.598$, $p<0.01$), and tissue Na⁺ concentration has a significant inverse linear relationship to extracellular resistance. Khan et al. performed a prospective observational study to assess the relationship between fluid overload and hypertension using diuretic therapy with BIS³⁵. 312 CKD patients were enrolled and categorized in five different parts of hydration reference plot (HRP) generated by BIS (5.1% [normal BP and fluid status], 20.5% [hypertensive with severe fluid overload], 29.5% [hypertensive with mild fluid overload], 22% [hypertensive with normohydration], 10.2% [underhydration with normal/low BP] and 12.5% [normal BP with severe fluid overload]). Diuretics were administered to 46% of all patients due to BP and edema and were prescribed to most patients with [hypertensive with severe fluid overload] and [hypertensive with mild fluid overload]. The results showed that the BIS

helps classify CKS patients according to body fluid status and to manage hypertensive CKD patients. Verdalles et al. performed an evaluation study using BIS³⁶⁾. They divided patients with the dilatation of extracellular volume (ECV) measured by BIS into two groups as follows; the patients with ECV dilatation injected with a diuretic (n=30) and those without ECV dilation injected with an additional antihypertensive (n=20). After six months of follow-up, it was confirmed that the systolic BP decreased more in the patients with the ECV dilation group compared with those without ECV dilatation (21 mmHg vs. 9 mmHg, respectively; $p < 0.01$). In addition, nine patients in the ECV dilatation group and two in the other group reached a target BP of less than 140/90 mmHg. Although the BIS can be used as an effective approach for evaluating volume status, the BIS still needs further study in larger cohorts before it can become a generalized method.

Antihypertensives

Antihypertensives are often used in CKD and hypertension patients to achieve target BP. The selective renin inhibitor Aliskiren^{37,38)} and the selective endothelial antagonist Sitaxentan³⁹⁾ have been shown to affect BP. In addition, a 36-week randomized clinical trial using Aldactone, a steroid mineralocorticoid receptor antagonist, showed well tolerated in early stage 3 CKD patients with fewer than 1% episodes of hyperkalemia ($K^+ \geq 6$ mmol/l)⁴⁰⁾. However, these antihypertensive trials and the accurate results are not yet widely adopted in CKD patients. Although Aliskiren has antihypertensive properties, large randomized trials of Aliskiren in combination with ACEi or ARB therapy in diabetes or heart failure found no renal benefit, with the adverse event for the combination, such as hyperkalemia^{41,42)}. Aldactone is also used for treatment-resistance and control of hypertension, but caution is needed in CKD patients because of hyperkalemia risk⁴³⁾. Therefore, additional researches on antihypertensives based on key factors that can achieve the goal of BP control, renal protection, and slowing the progression of CKD need to be studied to improve treatment strategies.

Hyperkalemia in CKD

Hyperkalemia, commonly defined as plasma potassium

greater than 5.5 mEq/L⁴⁴⁾, is associated with a higher mortality rate, contributing to 1.9%-5% of deaths in patients with ESRD^{45,46)}. Hyperkalemia is strongly associated with impaired renal potassium excretion and not a redistribution of potassium⁴⁵⁾. Since the kidney in a normal condition can excrete a large amount of potassium, even if 400 mEq of KCl is consumed daily, several times higher than usual, plasma potassium will increase to less than 1 mEq/L on average if normal renal function and potassium excretion mechanism are ensured⁴⁶⁾. Therefore, hyperkalemia may indicate a fundamental impairment in renal potassium excretion⁴⁷⁾. These phenomena are possibly due to progressive CKD reducing the number of nephron units available for potassium secretion or impairing the rate of collecting duct potassium secretion. In addition, hypoaldosteronism can lead to decreased renal potassium excretion and acidosis, especially in metabolic acidosis, which may affect hyperkalemia by intracellular potassium exchanging for extracellular hydrogen^{45,48)}. In CKD, particularly in stages 4 or 5, potassium can be excreted extrarenal from sites such as the colon^{45,49)}. This phenomenon can be detected when GFR decreases to 1/3 and accounts for potassium elimination of 10-20 mEq/day⁵⁰⁾. Moreover, a normal person eliminates 5-10% of their intake, but patients with uremia may remove up to 25% of their daily potassium excretion from the body inappropriately through the gastrointestinal tract⁵¹⁾.

Hyperkalemia-inducible drugs

Beta-blockers such as propranolol increase potassium uptake, which is β_2 -receptor-specific, including cyclic adenosine monophosphate stimulation and $Na^+ - K^+$ ATPase activation⁴⁵⁾. Angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors, angiotensin receptor blockers, and aldosterone antagonists reduce the aldosterone-mediated effect on renal potassium excretion, induce hyperkalemia, and the resulting adrenal release from aldosterone depends on the adrenal-renal angiotensin system^{52,53)}. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) cause hyperkalemia by decreasing distal delivery and flow rate of Na^+ and reducing the flow-related component of potassium excretion^{45,54)}. Cyclooxygenase-2 inhibitors that induce sodium retention and decreased GFR can also lead to hyperkalemia^{55,56)}. Potassium-sparing diuretics, such as triamterene and amiloride, cause hyperkalemia by in-

hibiting apical epithelial sodium channel activity in the cortical collecting duct^{57,58}. Digoxin may induce hyperkalemia due to impaired renal excretion and impaired intracellular potassium absorption⁵⁹. In addition, cyclosporine (cyclosporine A) and tacrolimus are known to induce hyperkalemia^{60,61}.

Strategic approaches to potassium management in CKD

Management of dietary intake

Potassium and sodium intakes need to be considered simultaneously. High dietary K⁺ intake blunts diseases associated with an excessive sodium diet, such as hypertension and cardiovascular disease, whereas low dietary potassium increases the outcome of more dietary sodium⁶². In this regard, many previous studies have reported that higher dietary sodium and lower potassium could have detrimental effects on the progression of CKD, hypertension, and diabetes^{62,63}. Moreover, Korean and American diets lack potassium and are acid-producing due to the meat-based diets⁶⁴. A meat-based diet that does not involve an intake of fruits and vegetables is related to high net endogenous acid production known to contribute to CKD progression. Therefore, proper intake of dietary fruits and vegetables and administration of endogenous alkalis may not only reduce net endogenous acid production rather, it slows the progression of CKD⁶⁵. However, restricting dietary K⁺ is not the only correct method for all CKD patients. For example, a fruit and vegetable diet is recommended for patients with early-stage CKD with clinical hypokalemia or patients with borderline hypokalemia. Therefore, dietary K⁺ restriction must be cautiously applied in patients with more advanced CKD and documented hyperkalemia. A low-potassium diet is recommended for patients with advanced CKD and hyperkalemia. Clinical guidelines recommend that patients receive regular advice, such as an individualized diet and nutritionist counseling, when limiting potassium intake^{66,67}. In a comprehensive review paper⁶⁸, Kalantar-Zadeh and Fouque suggested an intake of 4.7 g/day in the early stages of CKD patients but a dietary potassium restriction of less than 3 g per day in CKD patients who tend to develop hyperkalemia. Ogata et al. found significant but relatively weak associations between serum potassium and dietary potas-

sium intake estimated by urine collections in CKD patients (unadjusted R² values were 0.08, 0.14, and 0.18 for CKD stages 3, 4, and 5, respectively)⁶⁹. Similarly, Noori et al. also showed a weak association (r=0.14) between dietary potassium and serum potassium among 224 patients⁷⁰. In addition, a low potassium diet may also result in folic acid deficiency in advanced CKD patients. A previous study reported that the incidence of folic acid deficiency in patients with CKD stage 3-4 on a potassium-restricted diet was three times higher than in patients with CKD stage 1-2 on an unrestricted potassium diet⁷¹. Moreover, severe folic acid deficiency may increase the risk of cancers, cardiovascular disease, and neurological disorders⁷¹.

Renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system inhibitor

Hyperkalemia in CKD patients can be managed by optimized RAAS inhibitor therapy or by limiting K⁺ dietary^{72,73}. The RAAS inhibitor therapy, such as angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors and angiotensin receptor blockers, slows the progression of CKD and improves the prognosis in concomitant diseases such as hypertension and diabetes. Moreover, RAAS inhibitor therapy has advantages in patients with CKD early stage for reducing hypertension and glomerulosclerosis, and patients with CKD late stage and hemodialysis for maintaining residual renal functional⁷⁴. On the other hand, RAAS inhibitors may also increase the risk of hyperkalemia⁷⁵. It should be cautioned that when RAAS inhibitors are used in patients with reduced renal function, the risk of hyperkalemia may be increased, as aldosterone modulates potassium excretion by the kidneys⁷⁶. Previous studies reported that hyperkalemia related to RAAS inhibitor takes occurrence 5% to 10% in CKD patients, whereas patients without CKD have less than 2% occurrence^{77,78}. Therefore, using RAAS inhibitors requires attention and the most optimal dosage considering the patient's benefit. Furthermore, multiple researchers are also studying to verify using new K⁺ binding agents such as sodium zirconium cyclosilicate (SZC) and Patiromer that maintains optimal RAAS inhibitor therapy and decreases serum K⁺ (More detailed information on newer K⁺ binding agents is explained following sections). Note that continuous further studies should accompany long-term clinical studies for evaluating

new K^+ binding agents, although the benefits of these new K^+ binding agents are being reported.

Potassium-lowering drugs

Sodium Polystyrene Sulfonate (SPS) is an insoluble polymeric cation exchange resin applied in oral formulation or by the rectal route to exchange sodium for potassium ions. Potassium binds to SPS and moves through the gastrointestinal tract before being eliminated in the feces^{79,80}. SPS acts within 2 to 24 hours after administration and continues for 4 to 6 hours before being eliminated from the body⁸¹. The exchange capacity of SPS is about 33% or 1 mEq of potassium per gram of resin. SPS is not selective for potassium in the body, such as being able to bind with calcium or magnesium, so the exchange capacity of the resin is not constant and may reduce. A previous study for a randomized controlled trial evaluated the effect of SPS in CKD patients with 5.0 to 5.9 mEq/L serum K^+ concentrations (double-blind test with two groups; with oral sorbitol-free SPS and placebo⁸²). The results demonstrated that the SPS group showed an apparent effect in reducing serum K^+ with significance compared to the placebo group. However, caution is needed in using SPS as studies report concerns about poor tolerability and serious gastrointestinal side effects.

SZC is a non-polymeric compound that exchanges K^+ for sodium and hydrogen ions in the gastrointestinal tract, clears bound K^+ via the feces, and is used for the management of hyperkalemia⁸³. Previous studies have reported that SZC helps correct hyperkalemia and maintain normokalemia in CKD patients. Roger et al., in a long-term study of 751 outpatients with hyperkalemia, showed that serum K^+ levels normalized after initiation of SZC, and normokalemia was maintained for up to 12 months⁸⁴. Ash et al. also showed that SZC significantly reduced serum K^+ levels in a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled study of 90 patients with hyperkalemia and stage 3 CKD (eGFR 30-60 mL/min/1.73 m²)⁸⁵. It has been reported that SZC administration is beneficial for managing serum K^+ concentration in patients with hyperkalemia, while another study reported that caution should be taken for dose-related mild to moderate edema due to reductions of dosage^{86,87}.

Patiomer and the SZC mentioned above is a new K^+ binding drug that effectively reduces serum K^+ concentrations in CKD patients with hyperkalemia. Patiomer is a spherical and nonabsorbable polymer with higher potassium binding capacity than polystyrene sulfonate polymers^{88,89}. It is characterized by low water absorption and includes calcium rather than sodium in the exchange cation⁹⁰. Moreover, patiomer is fully ionized at the physiological pH of the colon for optimal ion exchange with the highest potassium concentration in the gastrointestinal tract⁸⁸. Various studies have shown that in CKD patients receiving RAAS inhibitor therapy, patiomer significantly reduces serum K^+ concentration and positively affects the continuation of RAAS inhibitor therapy^{91,92}. However, despite the pharmacological properties and potassium-lowering effect of patiomer, as shown in the previous study and meta-analyses⁹³, it needs caution for adverse events such as nausea, constipation, and diarrhea.

Future consideration

By monitoring the effects, treatment, and favorable prognosis of hypertension and potassium metabolisms in patients with CKD, medical staff must try to balance the expected benefits and adverse effects caused by potassium restriction and RAAS inhibitors. In the hypertension domain, there is a need to expand attention not only to the use of antihypertensives but also to improving patients' lifestyles, such as sodium intake and obesity control. Moreover, while potassium-lowering therapies with patiomer or SZC have been beneficial in effectively and safely correcting hyperkalemia in patients, it should be noted that research is still ongoing to overcome some concerns about continued efficacy and safety. Thus, developing and continuously researching drugs that can effectively control the potassium level without worrying about adverse effects and a diet for controlling potassium are necessary.

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Hidden Acid Retention with Normal Serum Bicarbonate Level in Chronic Kidney Disease

Eun Sil Koh

Division of Nephrology, Department of Internal Medicine, Yeouido St. Mary's Hospital, College of Medicine, The Catholic University of Korea, Seoul, Republic of Korea

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Corresponding Author: Eun Sil Koh, MD, PhD
Division of Nephrology, Department of Internal Medicine, College of Medicine, Yeouido St. Mary's Hospital, The Catholic University of Korea, 10, 63-ro Yeongdeungpo-gu, Seoul 07345, Korea
Tel: +82-2-3779-2412; Fax: +82-2-3779-1364
E-mail: fiji79@catholic.ac.kr

Management of metabolic acidosis is crucial for preserving bone, muscle, and renal health, as evidenced by the results of several interventional studies conducted on patients with chronic kidney disease (CKD). Considering the continuity of CKD progression over time, it is reasonable to deduce that a subclinical form of metabolic acidosis may exist prior to the manifestation of overt metabolic acidosis. Covert H^+ retention with normal serum bicarbonate level in patients with CKD may result in maladaptive responses that contribute to kidney function deterioration, even in the early stages of the disease. The loss of adaptive compensatory mechanisms of urinary acid excretion may be a key factor in this process. Early modulation of these responses could be an important therapeutic strategy in preventing CKD progression. However, to date, the optimal approach for alkali therapy in subclinical metabolic acidosis in CKD remains uncertain. There is a lack of established guidelines on when to initiate alkali therapy, potential side effects of alkali agents, and the optimal blood bicarbonate levels based on evidence-based practices. Therefore, further research is necessary to address these concerns and establish more robust guidelines for the use of alkali therapy in patients with CKD. Herein, we provide an overview of recent developments on this subject and examine the potential therapeutic approaches that interventional treatments may present for patients with hidden H^+ retention, exhibiting normal serum bicarbonate levels - commonly described as subclinical or eubicarbonatemic metabolic acidosis in patients with CKD.

Key Words: Metabolic acidosis, Chronic kidney disease, Serum bicarbonate, Total carbon dioxide

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INTRODUCTION

Chronic kidney disease (CKD) is characterized as a set of sustained changes in the structure or function of the kidneys, which have consequences for the overall health of the affected individual¹. The prevalence of CKD, at all stages, displays regional differences with a range of 7-12%, across various parts of the world. CKD imposes a significant burden of national healthcare costs, especially in treating patients who require renal replacement therapy. Chronic metabolic

acidosis is a prevalent condition among individuals diagnosed with CKD, resulting from a primary disruption in the regulation of acid-base equilibrium². As renal function deteriorates, there is a clinical presentation where hyperchloremic acidosis transitions to high anion gap acidosis. The pathogenesis is attributed to inadequate filtration and reabsorption of organic anions. With the progression of renal disease, the amount of functional nephrons eventually becomes inadequate to effectively manage the net production of acids. Therefore, the prevalence and severity of metabolic acidosis in CKD patients progressively rises

as glomerular filtration rate (GFR) falls.

The Kidneys initially make adaptations to excrete acid, which helps prevent a decrease in the concentration of bicarbonate in the blood. In addition, despite significant retention of acid, the serum bicarbonate level does not decrease further, indicating participation of buffers outside the extracellular compartment. In CKD, acid retention occurs, which is buffered by alkali salts derived from bone. Consequently, the reduction of bone calcium carbonate due to chronic acidosis causes an increase in urinary calcium excretion, which is proportional to the accumulated acid secretion. However, as the GFR continues to decrease below 40 ml/min per 1.73 m², this protective mechanism becomes less effective. Chronic metabolic acidosis is also associated with increased protein catabolism, muscle wasting, impaired cardiac function, CKD progression, and increased mortality¹⁻⁴). The connection between declining serum bicarbonate levels and worsening clinical outcomes has sparked numerous studies where addressing metabolic acidosis has slowed the progression of CKD⁵⁻⁷). Consequently, we can infer that managing metabolic acidosis through alkali replacement might be a potential therapeutic approach for improving the previously mentioned health conditions. As one might expect, in the past 20 years, a wealth of research has explored the impact of oral alkali therapy on CKD progression for stage 3-5 patients with reduced serum bicarbonate levels³). Although there is evidence of low-to-moderate certainty indicating that oral alkali supplementation or a decrease in dietary acid consumption may decelerate the decline of kidney function in individuals with CKD and metabolic acidosis⁸).

The idea that treatment of acidosis could be beneficial in preserving kidney function was first proposed by Richard Bright, followed by Arthur Osman and Lyon et al. who conducted a crossover study showing that supplementation with bicarbonate might help preserve kidney function^{5,9,10}). Mathur et al. conducted a randomized trial and showed that correction of metabolic acidosis significantly attenuates the rise in blood urea in patients with mild to moderate CKD. There were no significant differences in baseline characteristics between the bicarbonate and placebo groups⁴). A significant study demonstrating the benefits of alkali administration in patients with CKD and metabolic acidosis

was conducted by Brito-Ashurst and his colleagues⁶). They revealed that, over a 2-year period, oral sodium bicarbonate supplementation delayed CKD progression and improved nutritional status, demonstrating its potential benefits for 134 CKD patients with baseline HCO₃ level 16 to 20 mEq/L.

Drawing upon this evidence, the KDIGO 2012 Clinical Practice Guideline recommend normalizing serum bicarbonate levels using alkali therapy when levels fall below 22 mEq/L, provided there are no specific contraindications¹¹). It is worth noting that the research underpinning these recommendations has focused solely on hypobicarbonatemic CKD patients or animal models. However, several experimental studies and clinical trial results have suggested that H⁺ retention may be present even when serum bicarbonate levels are within the normal range¹²⁻¹⁴). Considering the continuity of CKD progression over time, it is reasonable to infer that a subclinical form of metabolic acidosis may exist prior to the manifestation of overt metabolic acidosis. However, to date, there has been limited in-depth research regarding the clinical significance and importance of such subclinical forms of metabolic acidosis. In this review, we provide an overview of recent developments on this subject and examine the potential therapeutic approaches that interventional treatments may present for patients with hidden H⁺ retention, exhibiting normal serum bicarbonate levels - commonly described as subclinical or eubicarbonatemic metabolic acidosis.

Prevalence and Clinical Course of Subclinical Metabolic Acidosis

Since we do not routinely and accurately assess covert H⁺ retention in patients with CKD, the actual prevalence of subclinical metabolic acidosis is unknown, but it is likely to be higher than expected. In one study, it has been reported that approximately 85% of non-dialysis patients were found to have normal serum bicarbonate levels¹⁵). It is unclear what proportion of these individuals exhibit H⁺ retention, which would consequently classify them as having subclinical metabolic acidosis. In two recent studies, nearly every eubicarbonatemic patient with stage 2 CKD assessed at baseline exhibited an estimated H⁺ retention greater than 0 mEq^{16,17}). Therefore, by embracing the broader definition of the condition, metabolic acidosis can be considered an

early complication of CKD. Nonetheless, the sample size of the tested population is limited, necessitating further research in this area. It can be hypothesized that estimated H^+ retention would be greater and virtually ubiquitous in eubicarbonatemic patients with CKD stages 3 and 4. While the exact prevalence is yet to be established, subclinical metabolic acidosis is probably prevalent in the majority of CKD stage 2-4 patients who follow a typical Western diet.

In actual clinical outpatient settings, we can recognize metabolic acidosis using serum total CO_2 (tCO_2) concentration obtained from venous samples, a surrogate for arterial $[HCO_3^-]$. Venous tCO_2 levels are higher than arterial $[HCO_3^-]$ levels due to elevated levels of venous PCO_2 . Under stable clinical conditions, the difference between venous tCO_2 and arterial $[HCO_3^-]$ levels is usually no greater than 2-4 mEq/L. This difference is mainly attributed to the dissimilarities between venous and arterial blood and the buffering effect of hemoglobin on CO_2 -mediated H^+ buffering, with a negligible contribution from erythrocyte carbamino- CO_2 ¹⁸⁾. Not all cases with low tCO_2 are indicative of metabolic acidosis, as serum HCO_3^- levels can also decrease in respiratory alkalosis¹⁹⁾. Consequently, it is not easy to determine the presence or absence of metabolic acidosis in CKD patients with respiratory alkalosis based solely on tCO_2 measurements. Such considerations make it challenging to diagnose metabolic acidosis based on tCO_2 alone, even in cases of simple acid-base disturbances. This difficulty becomes even more pronounced and complex in the context of mixed acid-base disorders. For an accurate diagnosis, recent data published by a Japanese research team recommends incorporating venous sample pH measurements into the interpretation, emphasizing the necessity of such tests²⁰⁾. The researchers conducted a retrospective study analyzing 1,058 Japanese patients with an eGFR below 60 ml/min per 1.73 m². This study evaluated the impact of venous blood pH measurements on the relationship between hypobicarbonatemia and incident ESKD. In their study cohort, approximately three-fourths of the patients had normal serum bicarbonate levels. In contrast, they found that nearly 40% of patients with CKD with hypobicarbonatemia did not have associated acidemia (pH <7.32). While it is possible that not all of these individuals had eubicarbonatemic metabolic acidosis, the findings highlight the importance of considering venous pH

samples alongside serum bicarbonate analysis. In addition, even the concentration of tCO_2 varies in terms of normal range, as demonstrated by data from the United States, which shows differing reference values across 64 institutions, 2 large commercial clinical laboratories, and the major textbook of clinical chemistry²¹⁾. The reported limits of serum tCO_2 values by clinical laboratories are frequently excessively broad and do not consistent with the range of expected in healthy individuals at sea level. Consequently, it is advisable to narrow the normal range for serum tCO_2 at sea level to 23-30 mEq/L to accurately identify most cases of covert subclinical metabolic acidosis²²⁾.

It is biologically plausible that a subset of CKD patients with normal tCO_2 may experience acid-induced organ damage, which could also contribute to poor kidney outcomes. In the African American Study of Kidney Disease and Hypertension study, as well as in groups of United States veterans and Cleveland Clinic Foundation patients with CKD, individuals with low-normal levels of tCO_2 were found to have a higher risk of either mortality or decline in GFR compared to those with high-normal levels of tCO_2 ^{2,7,8,23)}. It is possible that individuals with low-normal levels of tCO_2 are at a higher risk of experiencing adverse outcomes because they require a greater compensatory response in order to maintain normal tCO_2 levels, which may result in more acid-mediated injury to their organs compared to those with high-normal levels of tCO_2 ²⁾.

Pathophysiologic Aspect of Subclinical Metabolic Acidosis

As previously mentioned, acid accumulation during the early stages of CKD may not be enough to decrease serum bicarbonate below the normal range, yet it can still instigate adverse effects, including bone loss, and muscle protein degradation⁹⁾. Additionally, chronic metabolic acidosis in CKD can induce kidney injury and accelerate CKD progression. In CKD, H^+ retention reduces the pH of the interstitial and intracellular compartments within the kidney. This triggers a cascade of reactions, including the stimulation of ammoniogenesis in the remaining nephrons, increased production of proinflammatory cytokines, and elevated levels of angiotensin II, aldosterone and endothelin-1 (ET-1) in the kidneys²⁴⁾.

Elevated net endogenous acid production from dietary

sources can increase H^+ retention in the body. In rats exhibiting normal kidney function or a decrease in nephron mass, the consumption of dietary acid resulted in higher levels of acid in both blood and kidney cortex, along with a rise in net acid excretion in urine, all without causing a discernible drop in plasma pH or bicarbonate concentration²⁵⁻²⁷). In addition, in hypertensive patients with eubicarbonatemia, albuminuria, and stage 2 CKD, who were consuming an acid-promoting Western diet, acid retention was observed along with increased plasma and urine levels of ET-1 and aldosterone, compared to individuals with stage 1 CKD following the same diet¹³). Conversely, reducing net endogenous acid production through dietary modifications or administering alkaline compounds can help alleviate H^+ retention. A single oral dose of $NaHCO_3$ led to a smaller reduction in urinary net acid excretion in patients with stage 2 CKD compared to those with stage 1, which aligns with increased acid retention in stage 2 CKD patients. After 30 days of oral $NaHCO_3$ administration, both plasma and urine levels of ET-1 and aldosterone decreased in patients with stage 2 CKD. The compensatory responses observed in response to nonvolatile acids suggest that even in cases of subclinical metabolic acidosis, patients with CKD may be retaining excessive amounts of acid, which could contribute to kidney damage. As CKD progresses continuously, it is important to correct acidosis at an early stage to prevent further deterioration of the kidney's adaptive response.

Diagnosis of Subclinical Metabolic Acidosis

As eubicarbonatemic metabolic acidosis may be involved in the progression of CKD, additional urinary markers are being investigated to aid in the evaluation of the risk of progression to end stage kidney disease (ESKD) and mortality in CKD patients without apparent acidosis.

Urine ammonium

Urinary acid excretion measurements may identify patients with CKD with eubicarbonatemic metabolic acidosis. Thus, metabolic acidosis is distinguished by a decreased rate of both the production and excretion of NH_4^+ . Measuring urinary ammonia was useful in identifying increased dietary

H^+ and assessing potential renal acid load in the early stages of CKD²⁸). In response to metabolic acidosis, the renal proximal tubule undergoes changes in its metabolism and transport properties. The tubule increases the uptake and breakdown of glutamine and citrate, while reducing the recovery of phosphate from the ultrafiltrate. The increased breakdown of glutamine leads to greater ammoniogenesis and gluconeogenesis, with the excretion of ammonium ions helping to eliminate acid. These processes also generate HCO_3^- that are added to the plasma, partially restoring acid-base balance²⁹). However, in CKD, the development of metabolic acidosis is often accompanied by a decrease in urine ammonium excretion³⁰). In a study with the African American Study of Kidney Disease and Hypertension database, it was found that urine ammonium excretion decreased as measured GFR decreased. The finding that lower urine ammonium excretion is associated with higher mortality or ESKD suggests that early markers of kidney failure affecting acid-base balance may be useful in identifying individuals at risk of these outcomes, even if they have normal serum bicarbonate levels³¹). These studies indicate that acid accumulation can occur in early CKD and may not be reflected by serum acid-base parameters typically used to diagnose metabolic acidosis.

Urine citrate collection

Patients with CKD tend to have lower levels of acid excretion through ammonium as well as lower levels of base excretion through citrate and other organic anions compared to individuals without CKD. This may be a compensatory mechanism to maintain acid-base balance. As CKD progresses, acid excretion decreases even further while base excretion, such as citrate, increases in response to alkali. Therefore, evaluating urine citrate levels can serve as an early and reliable indicator of impaired acid-base balance in these patients³²).

Recent research provides evidence that measuring urinary citrate excretion, which is the most prevalent organic base in the urine that can be converted to bicarbonate, is a valuable method for detecting acid retention in CKD patients who have normal serum bicarbonate levels. Furthermore, it can also be used to evaluate the effectiveness

of alkali therapy in these patients^{16,17}. Patients with CKD stage 2 showed higher baseline acid retention compared to those with CKD stage 1, and had lower urinary excretion of citrate. After consuming base-producing fruits and vegetables for 30 days, acid retention decreased in CKD stage 2 patients but not in CKD stage 1 patients. However, the overall acid retention remained higher and urinary citrate excretion remained lower in CKD stage 2 patients compared to CKD stage 1 patients, supporting the potential utility of low urinary citrate excretion in identifying acid retention in eubicarbonatemic CKD patients.

As a regular process, the body tends to excrete base by means of citruria in response to fluctuating dietary base loads. The primary mechanism for controlling urinary citrate excretion is the reabsorption that occurs in the proximal tubule²⁹. Over the past two decades, extensive studies have investigated the cellular mechanisms of how the proximal tubule handles citrate in response to acid loading. When the body is subjected to systemic acid loading or the proximal tubule cell is intracellularly acidified, a series of coordinated processes are triggered, such as increased luminal citrate uptake, cytoplasmic metabolism, and citrate entry and metabolism by the mitochondria. These processes work together to reduce citrate in the urine as a general response to acid. Therefore, measuring urinary citrate excretion is a more appropriate way to assess acid loading in the body compared to measuring plasma bicarbonate levels. A recent study found that in patients with CKD who are at risk for H⁺ retention, lower levels of urinary citrate were more effective in detecting eubicarbonatemic acidosis compared to levels of urinary ammonium¹⁷. However, it is important to note that neither of these tests could accurately diagnose subclinical metabolic acidosis, and there is still no common consensus on such diagnostic methods. This strongly indicates that there is a pressing need for additional research to be conducted in order to develop a more reliable and effective clinical test for this condition.

Intervention of Subclinical Metabolic Acidosis

Chronic metabolic acidosis is a frequently observed condition in patients with CKD. The KDIGO 2012 Clinical Practice Guideline recommend administering alkali therapy to main-

tain serum bicarbonate levels above 22 mEq/L in order to prevent the deleterious effects of acid load on bone mineral density and protein catabolism¹¹. The results of small-scale intervention studies conducted thus far provide evidence that correcting chronic metabolic acidosis in patients with CKD by correcting acid load can delay the progression of the disease^{4,6}. Thus, the initial studies looked into how taking alkali supplements could affect the progression of CKD in participants with overt metabolic acidosis. Subsequent studies focused on the potential benefits of alkali supplements in participants with reduced eGFR but who were at an earlier stage of acid stress with eubicarbonatemia (Table 1). Mahajan et al. investigated the efficacy of sodium-based alkali for reducing acid retention in early-stage CKD patients consuming diets high in acid-producing foods, with reduced but relatively preserved eGFR and eubicarbonatemia. Their findings revealed a significant reduction in the rate of eGFR decline in patients treated with oral NaHCO₃ compared to those receiving sodium chloride or placebo¹². In addition, given that alkali therapy in CKD animal models has demonstrated a reduction in kidney angiotensin II, which mediates GFR decline in partial nephrectomy models of CKD, and that metabolic acidosis may increase kidney angiotensin II in animals, it is hypothesized that alkali treatment for metabolic acidosis in eubicarbonatemic patients with plasma tCO₂ levels over 22 mEq/L may preserve GFR¹⁴. Goraya et al. randomized 108 patients with stage 3 CKD and plasma tCO₂ levels of 22-24 mEq/L to either usual care or interventions designed to reduce dietary acid by 50% using sodium bicarbonate or base-producing fruits and vegetables³³. Plasma tCO₂ level decreased in the usual care group but increased in the bicarbonate or fruits and vegetables group. Furthermore, urine excretion of angiotensinogen, an index of kidney angiotensin II, increased in the usual care group but decreased with bicarbonate or fruits and vegetables. Although all groups experienced a decrease in eGFR calculated by creatinine and cystatin C, the loss was less at 3 years with bicarbonate or fruits and vegetables than in the usual care group. Therefore, they concluded that dietary alkali treatment for metabolic acidosis in eubicarbonatemic patients with plasma tCO₂ levels over 22 mEq/L reduces kidney angiotensin II activity and preserves eGFR³³.

Table 1. Recent studies with alkali treatment in chronic kidney disease within normal range of serum HCO₃

Study	Year	Study Designs	Study Subjects (n)	Baseline eGFR (ml/min per 1.73 m ²)	Baseline serum HCO ₃ (mEq/L)	Interventions	Follow up duration (months)	Findings in renal outcomes
Mahajan A, et al. ¹²⁾	2010	Prospective, randomized, placebo-controlled, blinded	120	75	26 (tCO ₂)	Placebo, NaCl, NaHCO ₃	60	Renal benefit of NaHCO ₃ in hypertensive nephropathy (↓ eGFR decline, ↓ blood pressure)
Goraya N, et al. ³³⁾	2014	Single center, randomized, open label	108	30-59	22-24 (tCO ₂)	Usual care, F+V, NaHCO ₃	36	Renal benefit of F+V and NaHCO ₃ (↓ urine angiotensinogen and preserves GFR)
Melamed ML, et al. ³⁴⁾	2020	Multicenter, randomized, double-blind, placebo controlled	149	36±11	24±2.2	Placebo, NaHCO ₃	24	No difference of eGFR between study groups
Raphael KL, et al. ³⁶⁾	2020	Multicenter, randomized, double-blind, placebo controlled	74	51±18	24±2 (tCO ₂)	Placebo, NaHCO ₃	6	No difference of kidney injury markers in diabetic kidney disease
Raphael KL, et al. ³⁵⁾	2020	Multicenter, randomized, double-blind, placebo controlled	192	36±9	24±2	Placebo, NaHCO ₃	7	No significant difference in the eGFR

eGFR, estimated glomerular filtration rate; NaHCO₃, sodium bicarbonate; NaCl, sodium chloride, F+V, fruits and vegetables; tCO₂, venous total CO₂ level

Nonetheless, recent studies have not reached a consensus on this matter. Melamed and his colleagues randomly divided 149 patients with CKD stages 3-4 into two groups and administered either 0.4 mg/kg body weight of NaHCO₃ or placebo, following them up for two years³⁴⁾. The baseline eGFR of study population was 36.3±11.2 ml/min per 1.73 m² with mean serum HCO₃, 24.0±2.2 mEq/L. After two years, there were significant differences in serum bicarbonate and potassium levels between the two groups, but there were no differences in renal outcomes or bone mineral densities³⁴⁾. The researchers speculated that the differences between their results and previous reports may be attributed to differences in study design, such as randomization. Furthermore, the Base Pilot trial conducted across multiple centers, evaluated the safety, tolerability, adherence, and pharmacodynamics of two doses of NaHCO₃ over a period of 28 weeks in adults with eGFR levels between 20-44 or 45-59 ml/min per 1.73 m² and urinary albumin/creatinine levels above 50 mg/g, and serum bicarbonate levels between 20-28 mEq/L³⁵⁾. The researchers concluded that a high dose of 0.8 mEq/kg of lean body weight daily NaHCO₃ was also safe and reasonable for future related studies, as no additional side effects were observed. However, the

observation period was short, there was no improvement in eGFR in the high-dose NaHCO₃ treatment group; on the contrary, there was an increase in albuminuria. The study group assumed that the reasons for the slightly increased albuminuria is related to the effect of urinary pH on urinary protease activity, which warrants further investigation. In addition, Raphael and his colleagues conducted a study that investigated the effects of NaHCO₃ on renal fibrosis and injury markers in patients with diabetic nephropathy with eubicarbonatemia³⁶⁾. This was a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial that included 74 participants with type 1 or 2 diabetes, eGFR of 15-89 ml/min per 1.73 m², and albuminuria, with a tCO₂ concentration ranging from 22-28 mEq/L. Participants received either oral NaHCO₃ or placebo for six months. The primary outcomes were changes in urinary TGF-β1, renal injury markers including kidney injury molecule-1 (KIM-1), fibronectin, neutrophil gelatinase-associated lipocalin (NGAL), and albuminuria from baseline to 3 and 6 months. Sodium bicarbonate therapy increased the mean blood tCO₂ level by 1.2 mEq/L, elevated urine pH, and decreased urinary ammonium excretion. However, it did not significantly reduce TGF-β1, KIM-1, fibronectin, NGAL, or amount of albuminuria³⁶⁾. These findings are in

contrast to a previous pilot study in patients with hypertensive CKD and normal blood $t\text{CO}_2$ levels, where sodium bicarbonate was shown to decrease urinary TGF- β 1 levels and preserve renal function in the early stages of the disease^{12,33}. The observed disparities in the study outcomes could be due to differences in the design of the studies or variations in the progression of metabolic acidosis, which maybe influenced by the underlying etiology of CKD. As such, further investigation is necessary to shed light on this matter.

It is crucial to take into account the safety concerns related to long-term NaHCO_3 supplementation. This matter involves the potential for sodium-mediated fluid retention, which can lead to complications such as elevated blood pressure, pulmonary edema, and heart failure. Nonetheless, the 28-week study revealed no noteworthy disparities in total body weight among the three groups, and the frequency of escalating diuretic therapy was also similar³⁵. However, given that a large CKD cohort demonstrated a higher risk of heart failure events and mortality with persistent serum bicarbonate levels exceeding 26 mEq/L, caution must be exercised when considering NaHCO_3 supplementation therapy in patients with underlying conditions associated with severe Na^+ retention^{37,38}. In addition, there may be potential side effects that have not been thoroughly investigated, such as the impact of correcting metabolic acidosis on vascular calcification in CKD. De Solis et al. found that uremic animals treated with intraperitoneal sodium bicarbonate exhibited substantially greater vascular calcification³⁹. Notably, the bicarbonate concentration in these animals was similar to that in healthy animals, whereas uremic animals with untreated metabolic acidosis had lower bicarbonate concentrations and similar levels of vascular calcification compared to healthy animals. These results suggested that correcting metabolic acidosis may promote vascular calcification in CKD, and that metabolic acidosis may a protective role against renal calcification and loss of GFR in uremic animals on a high-phosphate diet^{40,41}. Therefore, it may be prudent to withhold alkaline therapy in patients with hyperphosphatemia. These findings highlight the need for large-scale clinical trials with long-term follow-up to assess the safety and efficacy of alkaline therapy in humans, given the potential for severe complications⁴².

Veverimer, previously known as TRC101, is a new type of non-absorbable polymer that attaches to hydrogen cations and chloride anions in the gastrointestinal tract and is then eliminated through feces. This results in an increase in serum bicarbonate levels without the need for sodium supplementation^{43,44}. There are still uncertainties surrounding the mechanism of action, electrolyte profile, potential interaction with colonic bacterial flora, and optimal usage of veverimer^{45,46}. We are eagerly anticipating the outcomes of the ongoing research investigating the impact of veverimer on the progression of CKD. In the absence of any significant long-term safety issues, veverimer has the potential to become a valuable addition to our existing treatment arsenal. It is imperative to compare the efficacy of veverimer to that of sodium bicarbonate for treating eubicarbonatemic metabolic acidosis in CKD patients.

Adequate consumption of fruits and vegetables is an important and traditional alkaline supplementation approach. Kelly et al. conducted a meta-analysis of 104 studies with 2,755,719 participants, which revealed that higher intake of potassium and vegetables was associated with reduced odds of CKD, while higher salt intake was linked to increased odds of CKD⁴⁷. The study supports previous findings from Bach et al.'s meta-analysis, which demonstrated that a healthy diet with higher intake of fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy, whole grains, and fiber, combined with lower intake of sodium is associated with a 30% reduction in kidney damage and improved overall health, including high BP, metabolic acidosis, phosphorus, gut microbiome, and lower glycosylated hemoglobin⁴⁸. Plant-based diets, which were usually avoided due to concerns of hyperkalemia in CKD patients, have also been shown to provide benefits even for those with ESKD⁴⁹. Additionally, a 24-month study of 47 patients with stage 3 or 4 CKD demonstrated that a dietary potassium-restricted group had only a slightly lower serum K^+ concentration compared to the control group, suggesting that plant-based diets may still be an appropriate alkali option for CKD patients⁵⁰.

CONCLUSIONS

CKD patients with hidden H^+ retention with normal bicarbonate levels may exhibit maladaptive responses that lead

to deterioration of kidney function due to the loss of adaptive compensatory mechanisms of urinary acid excretion. Modulating these responses early on may be a crucial therapeutic strategy in preventing CKD progression. However, to date, the optimal approach for alkali therapy in subclinical metabolic acidosis in CKD remains uncertain. There is a lack of established guidelines on when to initiate alkali therapy, potential side effects of alkali agents, and the optimal blood bicarbonate levels based on evidence-based practices. Addressing these knowledge gaps is likely to have significant clinical implications. Therefore, further research is necessary to address these concerns and establish more robust guidelines for the use of alkali therapy in CKD patients.

Declaration of Interest

The authors have no financial conflict of interest to declare.

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Management for Electrolytes Disturbances during Continuous Renal Replacement Therapy

Song In Baeg^{1*}, Kyungho Lee^{2*}, Junseok Jeon², Hye Ryoung Jang²

¹Division of Nephrology, Department of Internal Medicine, Myongji Hospital, Hanyang University Medical Center, Goyang;

²Division of Nephrology, Department of Medicine, Sungkyunkwan University School of Medicine, Samsung Medical Center, Seoul, Republic of Korea

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*These two authors contributed equally as co-first authors.

Corresponding Author: Hye Ryoung Jang, MD, PhD

Division of Nephrology, Department of Medicine, Sungkyunkwan University School of Medicine, Samsung Medical Center, Irwon-ro 81, Gangnam-gu, 06351 Seoul, Korea

Tel: +82-2-3410-0782; Fax: +82-2-3410-0064

E-mail: shinehr@skku.edu

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The above article (doi: 10.5049/EBP.2022.20.2.64) contains errors.

*Song In Baeg and *Kyungho Lee equally contributed as co-first authors.

Table 1. should be corrected [from Hemosol B0 (Fresenius) to Hemosol B0 (Baxter)] as following page.

The authors would like to apologize for any inconvenience this has caused.

Table 1. Compositions of commercially available CRRT solutions in Korea

Composition (mmol/L)	Solutions*						
	MultiBic 0K (Fresenius)	MultiBic 2K (Fresenius)	MultiBic 4K (Fresenius)	Hemosol B0 (Baxter)	Primasol 2K (Baxter)	Primasol 4K (Baxter)	Phoxilium (Baxter)
Na ⁺	140.0	140.0	140.0	140.0	140.0	140.0	140.0
K ⁺	0	2.0	4.0	0	2.0	4.0	4.0
Ca ²⁺	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.8	1.75	1.75	1.3
Mg ²⁺	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6
Cl ⁻	109.0	111.0	113.0	109.5	111.5	113.5	116.0
HCO ³⁻	35.0	35.0	35.0	32.0	32.0	32.0	30.0
Lactate	0	0	0	3.0	3.0	3.0	0
Glucose	5.55	5.55	5.55	0	6.10	6.10	0
HPO ₄ ²⁻	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.2

* Availability and trade names of the solutions may differ according to countries.

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Editorial Correspondence

The Korean Society for Electrolyte and Blood Pressure Research, Dept. of Internal Medicine, Chonnam national university medical school, 42 Jebong-ro, Dong-gu, Gwangju 61469, Republic of Korea

Tel: +82-62-220-6503, Fax: +82-62-225-8578

E-mail: junhaejil@gmail.com

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Key words locate at the bottom of abstract page.

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- Discussion
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- References (less than 50)

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(b) Papers published in supplements:

2. Kim GH, Han JS: Therapeutic approach to hypokalemia. *Nephron* 2002;92(Suppl 1):28-32.

(c) Books:

3. Halperin ML, Goldstein MB: Sodium and water physiology. In: *Fluid, electrolyte, and acid-base physiology: a problem-based approach*. 3rd ed., Philadelphia, WB Saunders, 1999, p227-282.

(d) Chapters in edited book:

4. Textor SC, Pohl MA: Renovascular hypertension. In: *Comprehensive clinical nephrology*, 3rd ed., edited by Feehally J, Floege J, Johnson RJ, Philadelphia, Mosby, 2007, p429-441.

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- Discussion: Focus on the specific area which the case emphasizes.
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tively.

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- References: Limit these to 30.
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