

PATIENT PERSPECTIVES ON BARRIERS TO SUCCESSFUL FLUID MANAGEMENT IN CHRONIC HEMODIALYSIS

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In chronic hemodialysis (CHD) patients, non-adherence to interdialytic weight gain goals is common, and associated with poor blood pressure control, hospitalizations and death. Patient education regarding fluid management is complex requiring patients to interpret, apply, and continually evaluate primarily quantitative dietary information. The objective of this study was to elicit and assess patient views on domains important to successful fluid self-management, including barriers to achieving recommended fluid goals. Five focus group discussions were held with 19 CHD patients average age (SD) of 54 (15) years, 63% female, 78% African American and mean (SD) dialysis vintage of 5 (4) years. Discussions were audiotaped, transcribed, and reviewed to identify and group comments into discrete domains. Two main themes emerged in which patients described either empowerment of adhering to fluid recommendations, or identified barriers within three major sub-domains: personal (knowledge, self-awareness, emotional), external (social support), or environmental factors. Most patient comments (41%) described the importance and desire for knowledge related to fluid balance in CHD care and another 28% the role of health beliefs and self-efficacy related to interpretation and application of fluid management recommendations. Social support and influences were only moderately viewed to influence daily fluid intake. Few patients (<5%) identified the physical environment as an important influence on fluid consumption. Based upon these results a survey to evaluate fluid management knowledge has been developed and its validation is in progress.

In summary, while many factors are important in the adherence of CHD patients to fluid restriction recommendations, patients view disease-specific knowledge as a key factor and efforts to evaluate and address actual and perceived deficiencies need to be addressed.