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*Best Health Care Medical Group, Inc.*  
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## Mortality in Dialysis Patients

*Risk was elevated for both cardiovascular and noncardiovascular causes.*

Patients with chronic kidney disease who receive dialysis are particularly at risk for cardiovascular (CV) mortality. To examine whether dialysis also elevates risk for noncardiovascular mortality, researchers studied a cohort of 120,000 new dialysis patients (mean age, 63; 61% men) in nine European countries. During as long as 3 years of follow-up (mean, 1.8 years), 35% died. Mortality data for the cohort were compared with general-population data from the same countries.

Age-adjusted mortality rates in the cohort for CV and non-CV causes were roughly equal (38 and 50 deaths per 1000 person-years, respectively) and both were 8 to 9 times higher than the corresponding rates in the general population. Most non-CV deaths were caused by infection, particularly in younger patients (age, 20–34), and by malignancy, particularly in older patients (age, 45–74). Suicide and refusal of treatment were most common in younger patients (age, 25–34) and elders (age,  $\geq 85$ ).

**Comment:** These results indicate that disease prevention and surveillance in dialysis patients should address both cardiovascular and noncardiovascular conditions. The age variation in causes of death is interesting, although its clinical significance is unclear.

— [Thomas L. Schwenk, MD](#)

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