# Common Kidney tests can be a good indicator of risk from cardiovascular diseases

BY DOUGLAS PETERSON MAY 31, 2015

According to a recent study, Physicians may find help from the data to make better decisions on whether the patients need modification in their lifestyle including better diet, more exercise, treatments like statins that are used widely for preventing cardiovascular diseases. Simple parameters of kidney function and damage may help in predicting risk of heart failure and death from stroke or heart attack than the traditional tests involving blood pressure, and cholesterol level, according to a new research.
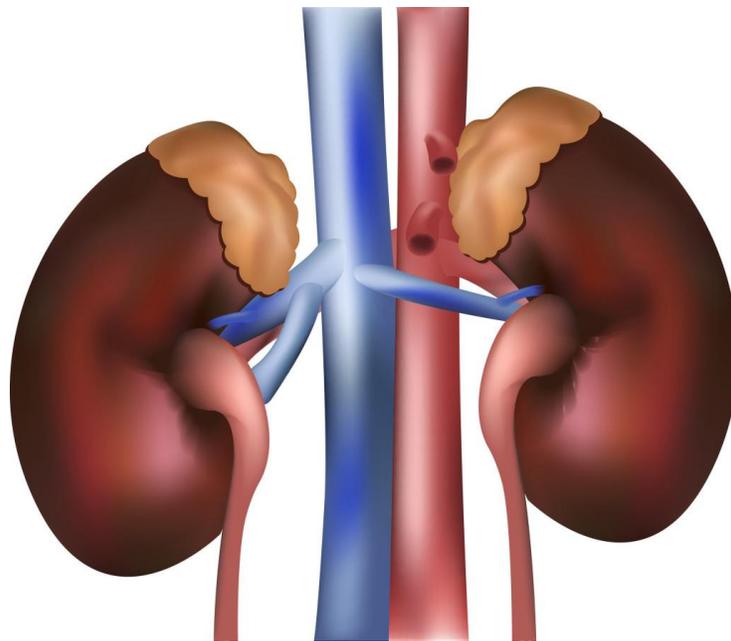
Kunihiro Matsushita, the study leader and assistant scientist at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health said that blood pressure and cholesterol tests are good indicators of cardiovascular risks, but they are

imperfect. The currently study says that information we are often collecting can help us do even better. Matsushita added that healthcare providers often have data on kidney function and/or kidney damage, that data could be used to better understand a patient's risk of cardiovascular disease.

The most common practice of assessing kidney function involves checking creatinine levels in blood which is a waste product from the muscles and reflects the efficiency of the kidneys in filtering it out. This process is known as GFR or estimated glomerular filtration rate.

Another key test is to measure albuminuria or an assessment of the volume of albumin that leaks out from the kidney into the urine.

Data obtained from 24 studies was analyzed by researchers along with the results from the GFR tests and albuminuria, and this included over 637,000 participants who did not have a history of cardiovascular disease

It was found that both albuminuria and GFR levels independently enhanced the prediction of cardiovascular disease in general and death from heart attack and heart failure in particular. However, albuminuria turned out to be the stronger predictor, outperforming systolic blood pressure and cholesterol levels and even smoking as a risk factor for stroke, death due to heart attack or heart failure.

The study has been published in the Journal Lancet Diabetes and Endocrinology.