



COVID-19 Can Cause Kidney Injury, Yet Most Americans Don't Know It

(NAPS)—According to a recent Harris Poll, too many people don't know all they should about the dangers of coronavirus—particularly how it can affect the kidneys.

COVID-19, it seems, attacks more than just the lungs.

In the new National Kidney Foundation-Harris Poll Survey on COVID-19 and Kidney Health, the findings show low levels of awareness on both the risk of developing an acute kidney injury as a result of COVID-19 and of the long-term effects of kidney damage.

“A significant number of patients going into the hospital to be treated for COVID-19 are coming out as kidney patients,” said Kevin Longino, CEO, National Kidney Foundation and a kidney transplant patient himself. “We believe this may be a looming healthcare crisis that will put a greater strain on hospitals, dialysis clinics and patients, for whom chronic kidney disease will be a lasting remnant of the coronavirus crisis—even after a vaccine is, hopefully, found.”

Acute kidney injury

Acute kidney injury (AKI) is a sudden episode of kidney failure or kidney damage that happens within a few hours or a few days, and is happening in about 15 percent of all hospitalized coronavirus patients, many of whom now need dialysis.

If a patient ends up in the intensive care unit (ICU) their odds worsen; reports indicate that one in five intensive-care patients have lost kidney function. COVID-19 will likely result in a higher number of Americans with chronic kidney disease and/or kidney failure than before the pandemic. Once kidneys fail, dialysis or a transplant is needed to survive.

Hospital shortages

Hospitals aren't prepared for the expected increase of kidney patients. In hot spots of the outbreak there are



Most Americans don't know it, but the coronavirus can hurt patients' kidneys as well as their lungs.

shortages of dialysis equipment, supplies and nurses properly trained to administer dialysis in the ICU. Most Americans, according to the Harris Poll, are concerned and want the federal government to step in.

Further, the Harris Poll found that the vast majority of Americans want the federal government to provide more resources toward diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of kidney disease, and significantly increased funding for kidney research because of kidney-related illness from COVID-19.

More poll results

The poll also found:

- Only 17 percent Americans are aware of acute kidney injury as a result of COVID-19;
- Only 46 percent of Americans are aware that COVID-19 will likely increase the number of Americans with chronic kidney disease or kidney failure;
- 58 percent of Americans are aware that COVID-19 can cause acute respiratory failure;
- 54 percent know it can cause pneumonia;
- 52 percent of those surveyed know COVID-19 can cause acute respiratory distress syndrome.

Learn More

Additional information about COVID-19 and how it affects kidneys can be found at www.kidney.org/coronavirus.