

Kidney Disease Awareness and Knowledge Among Families and Pediatric Survivors of Severe Acute Kidney Injury

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Background: Acute kidney injury (AKI) is common in pediatric patients and is associated with poor outcomes including increased risk of chronic kidney disease. It is unknown whether pediatric AKI survivors and their families are aware of their AKI diagnosis and understand the associated risks. We are seeking to identify awareness and disease-specific knowledge among pediatric AKI survivors and their families.

Objectives: We hypothesize that pediatric AKI survivors and their families have a low awareness of their diagnosis and want more information about kidney health.

Design/Methods: We performed a cross-sectional survey of AKI awareness and knowledge in pediatric patients with KDIGO Stage II or III AKI and their families near the time of discharge from Riley Hospital for Children. Families answered questions on AKI diagnosis awareness and AKI knowledge using the Kidney Knowledge Survey (KiKS).

Results: Of 16 families included in this analysis, 75% were unaware they had experienced AKI and 94% were unaware they had a 'problem with their kidneys'. Overall, the median AKI objective knowledge score was 60% (IQR: 31%, 69%). There was no difference in knowledge score between those that recognized their episode of AKI and those that did not.

In total, 69% of families correctly defined AKI as when 'your kidneys suddenly stop working well'. Most families recognized dehydration (56%) and infection (81%) as risk factors for AKI, however fewer recognized other risk factors such as ibuprofen use (31%). Only 38% of families reported that someone had discussed AKI during their admission, and 88% stated they wanted to learn more about AKI.

Conclusion: Most families of pediatric survivors of severe AKI were unaware that their child had AKI or problems with their kidneys. Many lacked understanding of AKI risk factors and knowledge of kidney health and desired more information.