

Does having more chronic conditions increase older adults' risk of declining kidney function?

DECEMBER 18, 2024 - Older adults with multiple chronic conditions may face a high risk of kidney function decline, according to new research published in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society.

In the study, 3,094 older individuals from the Swedish National Study on Aging and Care in Kungsholmen were followed for 15 years.

There was an independent dose-response relationship between the number of chronic conditions and kidney function decline, so that as the number of chronic conditions increased, kidney function decline became more likely and steeper.

When considering the makeup of conditions rather than just the number, the risk of kidney function decline was especially high for people with cardiometabolic conditions. On the other hand, people with psychiatric and respiratory comorbidities did not appear to have elevated risks of kidney function decline, despite having a higher average number of conditions.

“Our findings emphasize the importance of a comprehensive assessment that considers not only the overall chronic disease burden, but also the complex interplay between diseases when evaluating the risk of kidney function decline in older adults,” said corresponding author Giorgi Beridze, MD, MMSc, of the Karolinska Institute and Stockholm University. “Individuals presenting with diseases that are characteristic of high-risk multimorbidity patterns may particularly benefit from increased kidney function monitoring, promotion of healthy lifestyle, and timely pharmacological interventions.”

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