

Kidney disease treatment may be improving, study suggests

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Even though rate of disease is on the rise, fewer patients are suffering organ failure or dying.

(HealthDay)—Despite a rising incidence of kidney disease, rates of kidney failure and related deaths are declining in the United States, according to a new report.

Researchers at the United States Renal Data System (USRDS) say that about 14 percent of U.S. adults have chronic [kidney disease](#), which can progress to kidney failure. Risk factors for chronic kidney disease include diabetes, [high blood pressure](#), obesity, [acute kidney injury](#), a family history of kidney disease, being 50 and older, and being a member of a minority.

Because of an aging and overweight population, the rate of end-stage kidney disease is on the rise, according to USRDS.

According to 2012 data, across the United States almost 637,000 kidney failure patients are undergoing dialysis or have received a [kidney transplant](#), including about 115,000 people diagnosed with kidney failure.

However, patients may be faring better and living longer, the report's authors said. The growth rate

for new cases of potentially fatal kidney failure fell for three years in a row, from 2010 to 2012, according to the 2014 annual report from the USRDS, which is based at the University of Michigan.

"It is too soon to declare victory on the war against the rising tide of [kidney failure](#), but our analysis provides some good news about kidney disease in the U.S.," Dr. Rajiv Saran, director of the USRDS coordinating center, said in a university news release.

"We will follow these trends closely to see whether they are sustained over the coming years, study what factors may be responsible for bringing about this positive change, and explore how it may be even further accelerated," Saran added.

The report also found that in 2012, total Medicare spending for all stages of kidney disease was more than \$87 billion. That does not include prescription medications. About \$58 billion of that amount was spent caring for people with chronic kidney disease.

"A comprehensive approach to improving kidney health should include prevention and awareness of [chronic kidney disease](#)," Saran added. "Warning signs are minimal or non-existent, but simple tests can help with early diagnosis."

More information: The U.S. National Library of Medicine has more about [kidney failure](#).

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