Left ventricular function before and after kidney transplantation

Mohammad T. Omran, MD, Somayeh Khakpour, MD, Farshid Oliaie, MD.

ABSTRACT

Objectives: To evaluate left ventricular function by echocardiography before and after kidney transplantation (KT).

Methods: This analytical study included 50 patients who had successful KT in Shahid Beheshti Hospital, Babol, Iran from October 2005 to December 2007. The echocardiography study was performed by one cardiologist before and at least 3 months after KT. Data were analyzed by SPSS, and a p<0.05 was considered statistically significant.

Results: The mean age of patients was 33.94 ± 11.66 years, 66% were male and 56% less than 45 years old. The ejection fraction and stroke volume after KT increased, however, the left ventricular end diastolic volume, left ventricular end systolic volume, left ventricular end systolic dimension, and left ventricular end diastolic diameter decreased.

Conclusion: In patients with end stage renal disease, successful kidney transplantation could improve the function of the left ventricle.


From the Department of Cardiology, Shahid Beheshti Hospital, Babol University of Medical Sciences, Babol, Iran.

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Address correspondence and reprint request to: Dr. Mohammad T. Salehi Omran, Associate Professor, Cardiologist, Department of Cardiology, Shahid Beheshti Hospital, Babol University of Medical Sciences, Babol, Iran. Tel. +98 (111) 2252071. Fax. +98 (111) 2266192. E-mail: tomran40@yahoo.com

The heart and kidney are inextricably linked, and their communication occurs at multiple levels. Understanding these systems has become the key to the development of diagnostic and therapeutic targets in cardiovascular medicine. Many studies show that decreasing levels of kidney function act as a major adverse prognostic factor for cardiac events such as atherosclerosis, valvular heart disease (VHD), and myocardial disease. Successful kidney transplantation (KT) can significantly improve cardiac function compromised because of end stage renal disease (ESRD), and some studies reported that patients with ESRD and severe left ventricular (LV) dysfunction have improved after KT. The aim of this study was to evaluate LV function by echocardiography before and after KT.

Methods. This analytical study included 50 patients who underwent a successful KT in Shahid Beheshti Hospital, Babol, Iran from October 2005 to December 2007. The echocardiography study of LV function...

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including left ventricular end systolic volume (LVESV), left ventricular end diastolic volume (LVEDV), left ventricular end diastolic diameter (LVEDD), left ventricular end systolic diameter (LVESD), ejection fraction (EF), and stroke volume (SV) was performed by the same cardiologist for all 50 patients before and at least 3 months after KT. All patients were studied for pericardial effusion and VHD before and after KT. The proposal of this study was approved by the ethical committee of Babol University of Medical Sciences.

Data were analyzed by SPSS using paired t-test, chi-square test, student’s t-test, and McNemar’s test. A p-value of <0.05 was considered statistically significant.

Results. The mean age of patients undergoing KT was 33.94±11.66 years, 56% were less than 45 years old, and 66% were male. Before KT, the EF in 42% of patients was less than 60%. The parameters of echocardiography before and after KT are shown in Table 1. The EF and SV after KT increased, while LVEDV, LVESV, LVESD, and LVEDD decreased. There was no significant difference between echocardiography indexes in males compared to females, and the age or gender had no significant effect either. The VHD and pericardial disease were also evaluated in this study. Eleven patients had mitral regurgitation (MR) before KT, whereas only one patient showed MR after KT (p=0.002). A pericardial effusion was noticed in 3 patients, which improved after KT.

Discussion. In this study, LV function as shown by echocardiography indexes improved after KT, as well as the pericardial effusion, which was not observed until at least 3 months after KT. Other cardiac complications such as MR and tricuspid regurgitation have also shown improvements after KT. Age and gender did not have an effect on improvement of LV function. Siedlecki et al6 studied the relation of LV systolic dysfunction with survival of patients after KT. They found that from 653 patients with KT, 119 patients (18%) had LV systolic dysfunction (EF <45%). Sixty-six patients expired after KT throughout their study, and they concluded that the risk of cardiac events (p<0.01) and mortality (p<0.01) after KT was higher in patients with LV dysfunction. Sahagún-Sánchez et al7 in 2001 studied 13 patients with KT. In this study, 9 patients had left ventricular hypertrophy (LVH) and 6 patients had LV systolic dysfunctions, which improved 3 months after KT. In Larsson et al’s study,8 LVH also improved in 37% of patients with KT, as well as an increase in EF from 65% to 78% (p=0.01). Studying one ESRD patients suffering from congestive heart failure, Okouchi et al9 noticed an improvement in EF from 36% before KT to 50% after KT. Iqbal et al10 evaluated 32 patients with chronic kidney disease (CKD) and obtained the following data before KT: LVH 100%, dilation of LV 58%, and LV dysfunction 18%. Three months after KT those echocardiographic indexes improved (p<0.01). A study by Wali et al,11 on 103 patients with CKD that were evaluated before and after KT, showed that EF and LV function improved after KT.

In conclusion, our study revealed significant differences in echocardiographic indexes pertaining to LV function before and at least 3 months after KT. We also showed that MR, tricuspid regurgitation, and pericardial effusion improved after KT, confirming that KT is a treatment for CKD patients suffering from cardiac complications. However, the results of this study should be considered with some limitation. Factors such as blood transfusion, improvement of anemia, and electrolytes abnormalities, corticosteroid administration, and higher quality of care after surgery may interfere with the results. However, the effects of this variable were not significant, as we did not observe any changes in electrolyte abnormalities before and after surgery. Furthermore, the increased hemoglobin concentration after surgery could be attributed to transplantation.

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References


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