

Why we need a renal nutrition working group at the ERA-EDTA



Kidney disease has many nutritional challenges, being associated with multiple alterations at the level of both nutrient homeostasis and metabolism that lead, together, to a state of self-consumption recently termed protein energy wasting (PEW). PEW is common in patients with chronic kidney disease (CKD) and is associated with adverse clinical outcomes. A plethora of factors can affect the nutritional and metabolic status of CKD patients, requiring a combination of therapeutic manoeuvres to prevent or reverse protein and energy depletion. Renal nutrition was a cornerstone in CKD management before the development of dialysis therapies, but has progressively received less attention during recent years given that there are no patents, royalties or industry behind healthy eating. Additionally, there is no established consensus about the diagnosis of wasting or the frequency of screening required. Consequences of wasting are devastating, being a predominant short-term cause for the high mortality observed during dialysis treatment.

Furthermore, nutrients are substrates for metabolism, energy production and synthesis, being involved in every physiological pathway. We are what we eat, and a healthy diet will influence the course of many diseases, including CKD. Deciphering the potential of diet to modulate the course of kidney disease is important and understudied. Given the cultural, lifestyle and dietary diversity of European countries, dietary recommendations cannot be extrapolated directly from North American studies.

*from Denis Fouque and Juan-Jesus Carrero
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We felt that a European network of clinicians, dieticians, endocrinologists and researchers working to promote renal nutrition education would promote awareness of its importance and constitute a strong platform for research initiatives and innovations to fight disease outcomes through nutritional management. The EUROPEAN RENAL NUTRITION Working Group aims to be that network of healthcare professionals, allowing the conduct of research on the impact of lifestyle, diet, nutrient homeostasis and PEW management. European research in this field is already of high quality, but hampered by reduced funding, small patient cohorts and scientific isolation. We are confident that together we will be able to create strong and multidisciplinary initiatives to impact on CKD outcomes.

We are enthusiastic to initiate this venture. Please join us in the journey with your ideas, your thoughts and proposals of what can be achieved together. Becoming a working group member is free and will allow you to receive up-to-date information on our activities: CME courses, annual meeting and collaborative research programs. We will start at the ERA-EDTA conference in London with a pre-conference workshop on Thursday May 28th 2015, in the afternoon. From there, we are planning additional educational activities and awareness campaigns. We will initiate a European consortium of cohort studies of CKD patients willing to share their data for collaborative joint studies on nutritional outcomes. With this, we will be in a position to design new prospective data collection to analyse and, hopefully, to improve renal nutrition practice.