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MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

B.C. study finds advanced kidney disease progresses more slowly for some patients

Vancouver, BC – A study by B.C. researchers has revealed a wide variation in the progressive decline of kidney function among patients with advanced kidney disease.

Drs. Monica Beaulieu and Adeera Levin of the BC Renal Agency, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority, and their team of researchers also found that some patients with very limited kidney function can avoid the need for dialysis for longer than previously expected by medical experts. In addition, the study revealed a number of clinical variables associated with more rapidly progressive kidney disease. For example, younger patients with kidney disease and those with protein in their urine are more likely to experience a rapid decline in kidney function.

The first-of-its-kind study was made possible by the BC Renal Agency's unique clinical database – PROMIS – which includes comprehensive information about every patient diagnosed with kidney disease in the province.

“Ultimately, the results of our study show the need for a more individualized approach to treatment for patients with end-stage kidney disease,” said Dr. Beaulieu. “Some patients experience a rapid progression of their kidney disease, while others see a much slower decline in their kidney function.”

Based on these findings, further research is planned with the goal of developing a clinical tool to help physicians determine which patients with end-stage kidney disease are most likely to experience a rapid decline in their kidney function, and the timing of their need for dialysis. Knowing in advance when a patient will need dialysis is important for helping patients understand their treatment options, including independent options such as home hemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis.

March is National Kidney Month. The BC Renal Agency encourages British Columbians to learn more about their risk for developing kidney disease through a simple online quiz on its website, at www.bcrenalagency.ca.

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Backgrounder

Are Your Kidneys OK?

Test your knowledge of kidney disease by filling out the quiz posted throughout Kidney Month at www.bcrenalagency.ca. At the end of March, random draws will be made and prizes awarded.

What are some of the symptoms to look for?

In the early stages of kidney disease, many individuals experience no symptoms. However, common early symptoms of kidney disease include: foamy or bloody urine; a frequent need to urinate at night; headaches; and puffy eyes or ankles.

Why is there a Kidney Month?

While patients with kidney disease in British Columbia have some of the best outcomes in the country and a broad range of care options, early diagnosis and treatment are essential to achieve the best patient outcomes, as changes to diet or medication can slow or even stop the progress of kidney disease.

During the March Drive...

More than 8,000 Kidney Foundation volunteers will canvass homes across BC to raise awareness and funds for research and patient programs.

Where can I find out more about World Kidney Day?

www.worldkidneyday.org

Where can I learn more about kidney disease?

www.bcrenalagency.ca

www.kidney.bc.ca

The BC Renal Agency (www.bcrenalagency.ca) and the Kidney Foundation of Canada, BC Branch (www.kidney.bc.ca) are good sources of information for patients and their families. The BC Renal Agency, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority, has an informative DVD (English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Punjabi and Tagalog versions) featuring patients who tell their stories about living and dealing positively with kidney disease. The DVD can be ordered through the agency's online order form. It can also be viewed online (English only).