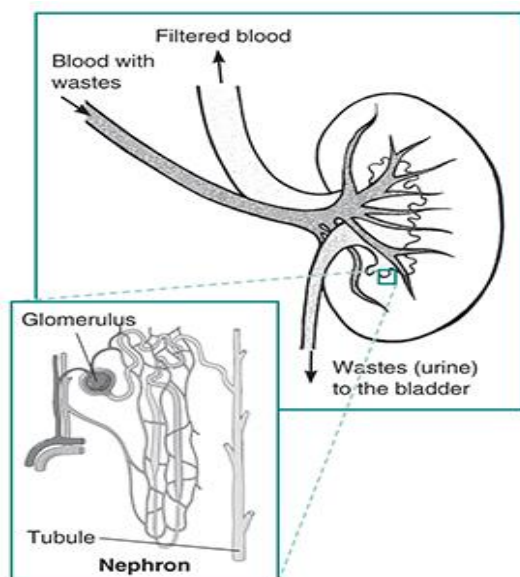


IgA Nephropathy

IgA nephropathy (IgAN) is one of the most common causes of glomerulonephritis. Glomerulonephritis is inflammation of glomeruli, the filtering units of the kidney.



What is IgA?

IgA is a protein in the blood. It is an antibody that helps us fight infections. People with IgAN have a build-up IgA in the glomeruli. This causes inflammation and scarring in the kidneys and can cause kidney failure.

What causes IgA nephropathy?

IgAN is an autoimmune disorder. That means that the IgA antibody appears foreign to the body and the immune system attacks it. Scientists do not know what triggers this process, but are working all over the world to find causes.

Signs and Symptoms

Usually you do not have symptoms from IgAN since damage can occur very slowly. You might see blood or bubbles in the urine.

About 20% of patients with IgAN will have kidney failure in 20 years after diagnosis of the disease. If IgAN has affected your kidneys for years, you will have signs and symptoms of damage like swelling in legs, high blood pressure, trouble breathing, nausea or vomiting. You would want to see a doctor much before that starts.

Diagnosis

Diagnosis can only be made by kidney biopsy. A biopsy removes a small piece of the kidney. This sample helps to figure out how much damage has already happened.

Your doctor will also do blood tests to check your kidney function. Urine tests will be done to look for protein in the urine.

Treatment

There is not a cure for IgAN, but these are ways to slow down the kidney damage:

1. Good blood pressure control with medicines that lower protein in urine
2. Low salt diet
3. Regular exercise

Immunosuppressive medicines might be used if your disease is causing damage at a faster pace.

Other Resources

The National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases Health Information Center

- Phone number: 1-800-860-8747
- Website: <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/kidney-disease/iga-nephropathy>

References/Source of Images:

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) (2015, November). IgA Nephropathy. Retrieved from <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/kidney-disease/iga-nephropathy>

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) (2014, April). Glomerular diseases. Retrieved from <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/kidney-disease/glomerular-diseases>

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 09/2017 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#8005.