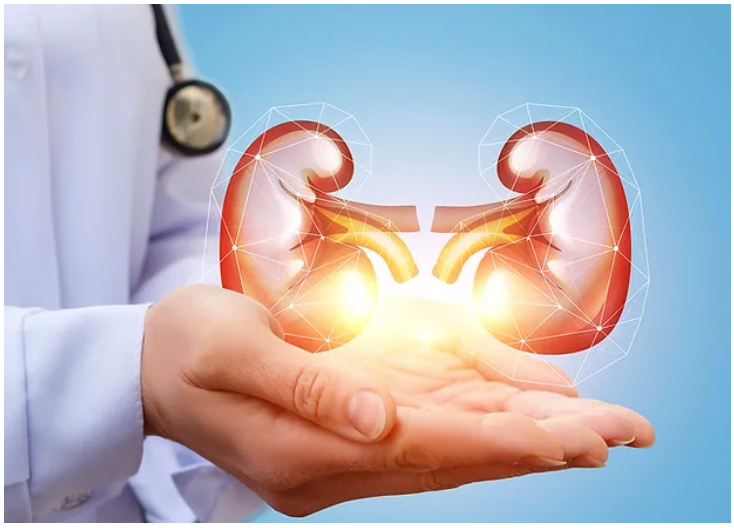
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Chronic Kidney Disease to be primary cause of death in Uddanam, Andhra Pradesh: Study

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Urging mobilisation of resources and public health initiatives to combat CKD in the region



A study conducted by a group of researchers at The George Institute for Global Health indicates that Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD), which is a gradual loss of kidney function, is the leading cause of death in the Uddanam region in the coastal district of Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh.

The age and sex-adjusted prevalence of CKD in this area is estimated at 18-22%, 2.5 to 3.3 times higher than the population prevalence of CKD reported from other regions of India. Previous reports in the lay press have highlighted a large burden of deaths due to CKD in Uddanam, but to date, there has been no study with formal ascertainment of causes of death in the region.

A population-representative study conducted by a group of researchers from The George Institute for Global Health has filled this gap and was published on October 31, 2023 in the Kidney International Report Journal.

The study used the Smart Verbal Autopsy (SmartVA) tool, that uses a computerised algorithm to interpret data from interviews with surviving family members or caregivers of deceased individuals. The tool has been validated by the Population Health Metrics and Research Consortium under various settings.

The key findings of the study reveal that 45% of deaths are caused by CKD. The study emphasises the importance of developing targeted methods for early detection, diagnosis, and treatment and urges the mobilisation of resources and public health initiatives to combat CKD in the region.

According to Professor Vivekanand Jha, Executive Director, the George Institute for Global Health, India, and the lead researcher of the study, “The research has revealed that chronic illness is not only a health problem but also the main cause of death in Uddanam. To prevent and manage CKD and increase community awareness of early diagnosis and treatment, we are working closely with the district and state health authorities to develop and implement region-specific policies that will improve the outcomes of these patients. The government has increased access to diagnosis and evidence-based treatment for kidney diseases which will likely translate into improved outcomes”.