THE EXPERIENCES OF BLACK AMERICAN LIVING KIDNEY DONORS

Sheila E. Adams-Leander
Lawrence Ganong

ABSTRACT

End stage renal disease (ESRD) is a chronic illness of significant concern in the United States and throughout the world. In many cases, the optimal treatment for ESRD is living kidney donation. A qualitative investigation into the experiences of Black American living kidney donors was conducted. Black Americans are of particular interest because they have a high incidence of ESRD, they have experienced discrimination regarding kidney transplantation, and they are under-represented in research related to living kidney donation. Five areas of new understanding were identified; three which may be unique to Black Americans or other minority living donors, and two that may apply to living donors regardless of race or ethnicity. Recommendations for research include improved understanding of pain management needs for living donors with history of substance abuse, and improved understanding of the importance of spiritual and religious practices for Black American living donors. Differing interpretations between health care providers and living donors about the meaning of donation to the donor and their family should be further investigated. Clinical implications include consideration of unique social and economic concerns of Black American living donors and continued efforts to reduce racial discrimination in provision of health care.