Frequent Cocaine Injection Among people with HIV and Hepatitis C Raises the Risk of Chronic Kidney Impairment

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Frequent injection of cocaine raises the risk of chronic kidney impairment among people coinfected with HIV and hepatitis C virus (HCV). Publishing their findings in the journal AIDS, researchers analyzed data on 1,129 participants in the Canadian Co-Infection Cohort who had baseline as well as follow-up measurements of serum creatinine between 2003 and 2014.

The study defined chronic kidney impairment as having an estimated glomerular filtration rate of less than 70 milliliters per minute per 1.73 meters. The data was adjusted for differences in hep C viral load and key demographic factors, HIV disease stage and other health problems.

Eighty-seven of the participants (8 percent) had chronic kidney impairment. Having injected cocaine was associated with a 2.03-fold increased risk of the health condition.

A total of 126 of 1,061 participants (12 percent) newly developed chronic kidney impairment during the study follow-up period, for a rate of 31 per 1,000 person-years (person-years are the cumulative years participants spend in a study). When compared with those who never injected cocaine, those who did so at least three days per week had a 2.65-fold increased risk of developing chronic kidney impairment more rapidly, while those who injected during at least 75 percent of the follow-up time had a 1.82-fold increased risk of more rapid development.

To read the study abstract, click here.

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