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**Prevalence of hemodialysis-associated pruritus and the association with sleep
quality among hemodialysis patients in Palestine**

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Abstract

Background:

CKD-associated pruritus (CKD-aP) is one of the common symptoms in patients undergoing hemodialysis, with a major effect on sleep quality because it mainly happens at night. As CKD-aP is not a problem that patients talk about with doctors very much, they do not receive good management. There is, however, no enough papers and reports about its presence in Palestine and effects on HD patients' quality of life.

Methods:

Cross-sectional study started in January till March of 2021 at HD centers of four different hospitals, which made it a multicenter one in West Bank, Palestine. HD patients aged 18 years or more were included in our research. Pruritus and sleeping problems were assessed by 5-D itching score and PSQI score, respectively.

Results:

There was 280 HD patients who we talked with at four hospitals in different cities which are: An-Najah National University Hospital and three other governmental hospitals in Tulkarem, Tubas and Jenin 250 accepted to be involved in our study that accounts for 89% response rate. The mean age of the participants was (54.9±15.08). 62.8% were males, and 42.4% of the participants were elderly (age≥ 60yrs). The PSQI score has a median [IQR] of 8[5-12] and 66.4% are poor sleepers with a score <5 indicating poor sleep quality. And the score was significantly associated with age category ($p = 0.017$), marital status ($p = 0.022$), occupational status ($p = 0.007$), chronic comorbidities ($p < 0.001$), chronic medication ($p = 0.008$), severity of pruritus ($p = 0.003$) and duration of pruritus ($p = 0.003$). While the 5-D itching score had a median [IQR] of 5.0[5.0–15.0], and 57.2% of them had a score ≥ 6 points and the score was significantly associated with residency ($p = 0.033$), and chronic comorbidities ($p = 0.026$). Finally, There was a significant correlation between participants rating of PSQI score, and 5-D itching score rs (248) = 0.235 ($p < 0.001$)

Conclusion:

Pruritus is a widespread complication among HD patients in Palestine. Pruritus also has major effects on sleep quality and it also has a devastating effect on their quality of life.

