

IN BRIEF

CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE

The soluble receptor of advanced glycation end product (sRAGE), which is known to have a protective effect on the vasculature in animal models, might also prevent vascular damage in humans, according to researchers in Italy. Basta and colleagues found that plasma sRAGE level was inversely associated with intima-media thickness and atherosclerotic plaque number in patients with chronic kidney disease; no such associations were found in healthy controls.

Original article Basta, G. *et al.* Circulating soluble receptor of advanced glycation end product inversely correlates with atherosclerosis in patients with chronic kidney disease. *Kidney Int.* 77, 225–231 (2010)

GLOMERULAR DISEASE

A letter published recently in *Nature Genetics* reports the identification of nine mutations in *INF2*—a gene expressed in podocytes that encodes a member of the formin family of actin-regulating proteins—which confer susceptibility to autosomal dominant focal segmental glomerulosclerosis. According to the authors, these findings emphasize the importance of the regulation of actin polymerization in the functioning of podocytes.

Original article Brown, E. J. *et al.* Mutations in the formin gene *INF2* cause focal segmental glomerulosclerosis. *Nat. Genet.* 42, 72–76 (2010)

NUTRITION

A novel agent has shown promise for the treatment of the common problem of malnutrition in patients with chronic kidney disease. Niemczyk and co-workers found that the stimulation of endogenous growth hormone secretion using twice-daily injections of a super-agonist of growth-hormone-releasing hormone (AKL-0707) was associated with improvements in endocrine status, nutritional status and body composition in malnourished patients with advanced predialysis chronic kidney disease.

Original article Niemczyk, S. *et al.* A super-agonist of growth hormone-releasing hormone causes rapid improvement of nutritional status in patients with chronic kidney disease. *Kidney Int.* doi:10.1038/ki.2009.480

CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE

Carotid endarterectomy is beneficial and should be performed in patients with stage 3 chronic kidney disease and symptomatic high-grade carotid stenosis, according to a recent study. Mathew *et al.* found that the procedure, which is sometimes avoided in patients with chronic kidney disease owing to their high risk of complications and death following invasive surgery, dramatically reduced the risk of stroke over a 2-year period.

Original article Mathew, A. *et al.* Carotid endarterectomy benefits patients with CKD and symptomatic high-grade stenosis. *J. Am. Soc. Nephrol.* 21, 145–152 (2010)