

The 8th Conference on Health Care of the Chinese in North America

Renal Transplantation for Chinese-Canadians in British Columbia

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Over the last ten years, British Columbia has intentionally focused on increasing the profile of renal transplantation as a treatment of end stage renal failure. From one of the lowest transplantation rates per million population, British Columbia has become one of the highest rate regions in North America. The Greater Vancouver area also saw a major demographic change related to recent immigration patterns. In some Vancouver Dialysis units, Chinese Canadians now represent 25-30% of dialysis dependent patients. More than 150 Chinese Canadian patients have undergone renal transplants, representing almost 15% of renal transplants in British Columbia.

Organ donation within the local society however does not reflect the change in population demographics. The majority of renal transplants in the Chinese-Canadian group received their organ from caucasian donors. Trans-racial transplants have raised the concern of more genetic disparity. In the U.S.A., Negroid recipients experience a lower transplant survival rate when compared to Caucasian recipients. The factors involved have been discussed in different forum, ranging from HLA mismatch to social-economic impact. Little data is available regarding other trans-racial renal transplants. The British Columbia experience therefore may be able to provide additional insights. A comparison will be discussed during this presentation.

Other medical aspects highlighted by this group of Chinese-Canadian patients will be discussed as well. Response to immunosuppression, rejection tendency, hepatitis carrier status, higher incidence of B blood group and other factors, may require special tailoring of treatment protocols.

Social issues including language barrier, family cultural barriers regarding family member donors, and low donor to recipient ratio within the community will be examined during this presentation.