

Transcript Details

This is a transcript of an educational program. Details about the program and additional media formats for the program are accessible by visiting: <https://reachmd.com/programs/asn-action-center/the-emerging-role-of-noninvasive-biomarkers-in-monitoring-kidney-transplants/13093/>

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ASN 2021: The Emerging Role of Noninvasive Biomarkers in Monitoring Kidney Transplants

Announcer:

Welcome to the *ASN Action Center* on ReachMD. On this episode, we're joined by Dr. John Friedewald, a Professor of Medicine and Surgery at the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine and the Medical Director of Kidney and Pancreas Transplantation at Northwestern Memorial Hospital. Dr. Friedewald is here to share the latest discussions on noninvasive biomarkers from the American Society of Nephrology Kidney Week 2021. Here's Dr. Friedewald now.

Dr. Friedewald:

I think that we're in a real exciting phase now in terms of the use of noninvasive biomarkers to monitor patients with kidney transplants. For so long, we monitored kidney function, which was a very poor marker of the immune response to the transplant or rejection. It really is a terrible marker of rejection. And really what we were left with was doing invasive biopsies to determine whether or not there was any rejection in a kidney transplant. Now we have several promising technologies, both in the blood and in kidney tissue, to better assess the immune response of the patient to the organ transplant. What that allows us to do is develop more frequent and less invasive, personalized adjusting of immune suppression, which is the main therapy we deliver to patients, to keep their organs healthy. And by doing that, we can hopefully reduce the amount of silent rejection that goes on in people's kidney transplants and keep them working much longer. I think one of our mottos is trying to get one kidney for life, and to do that, we really need to make sure that this process of chronic rejection, which is the main cause of the loss of kidneys over time, can be nipped in the bud, and having these noninvasive tests that we can do more frequently, less invasively will allow us to do that. So there's real hope that we can significantly push out the horizon of how long kidney transplants last. That's important for a lot of reasons. For the people with transplants, they can keep them longer, but also it means they don't have to go back on the waiting list, and that'll make more kidney transplants available for other people that are waiting on the list now. One in every six or one in every seven people on the waiting list are coming back for a repeat transplant because their last transplant rejected, and if we can keep those transplants lasting longer, it makes more organs available for other people. And so there are a lot of important reasons why these advances in immune monitoring through noninvasive biomarkers is changing the game, and it's an exciting time to be practicing in transplant.

Announcer:

That was Dr. John Friedewald, discussing the latest updates on noninvasive biomarkers from the American Society of Nephrology Kidney Week 2021. To access this and other episodes in our series, visit ReachMD.com/ASN, where you can Be Part of the Knowledge. Thanks for listening.