

SUCCESSFUL PREGNANCY IN A 44-YEAR-OLD HAEMODIALYSIS PATIENT

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Summary

A 44-year-old patient had been treated by intermittent haemodialysis for almost three years when she presented with a 28-week pregnancy. Successful delivery of a healthy but small infant was achieved by Caesarean section at 36 weeks. The successful outcome of this pregnancy was attributed to close control of the haemoglobin concentration and blood chemistry, and to increased frequency of dialysis. The relative value of various chemical tests of fetal maturity in the presence of maternal renal failure are discussed.

CHRONIC renal failure in women is frequently associated with amenorrhoea although in some patients regular menstruation may begin again after the institution of intermittent haemodialysis treatment. Fertility is impaired in women with chronic renal failure and successful conception is frequently associated with complications and fetal loss. Female patients on dialysis may ovulate (Goodwin *et al*, 1968) and become pregnant (Confortini *et al*, 1971), but most such pregnancies abort spontaneously or are terminated for medical reasons. Successful pregnancy has previously been reported in three patients under 30 years of age being treated by dialysis. We now report a further successful pregnancy in a dialysis patient aged 44 years.

CASE REPORT

The patient had a successful pregnancy in

1959 when she was aged 25. This was complicated by severe pre-eclampsia but subsequent investigation showed a normal intravenous pyelogram, a postnatal blood pressure of 140/95 mm Hg and a blood urea of 4 mmol/l. By 1965 the blood urea had risen to 13 mmol/l and the serum creatinine to 0.6 mmol/l. The intravenous pyelogram showed marked reduction in size of both kidneys. The urine protein excretion was 2.7 g/24 hours and hyaline casts and red blood cells were noted in the urine. A presumptive diagnosis of chronic glomerulonephritis was made. Dietary protein restriction was instituted in 1973 and an arterio-venous fistula constructed in 1974. By May, 1974 the patient's creatinine clearance had fallen to 1.6 ml/minute and intermittent haemodialysis was started for two nine-hour sessions per week using a one square metre