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Title

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Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/6s60c6tk>

Journal

American Journal of Kidney Diseases, 59(4)

ISSN

0272-6386

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Publication Date

2012-04-01

DOI

10.1053/j.ajkd.2012.02.159

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Peer reviewed

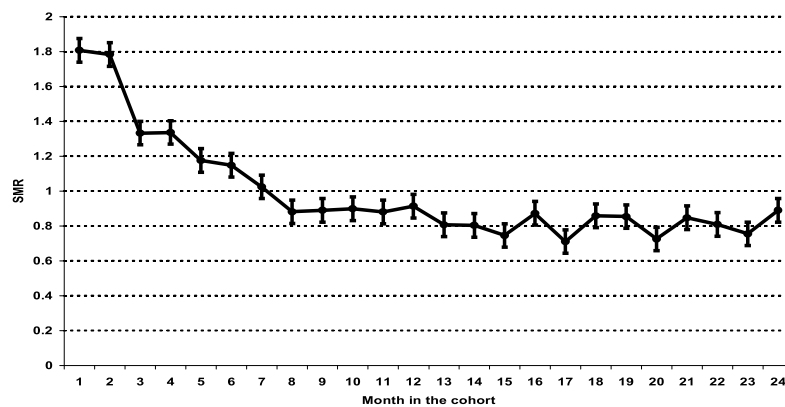
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PATTERNS AND PREDICTORS OF MORTALITY IN THE MONTHS AFTER INITIATION OF DIALYSIS IN INCIDENT HEMODIALYSIS PATIENTS

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Mortality among patients is much higher during few months. We examined mortality pattern during the first 24-months in a cohort of 18,707 incident MHD patients, who had started the first week of MHD in a DaVita clinic between 7/1/2001 and 6/30/2006, and calculated the standardized mortality ratio (SMR) using as the reference group another 57,456 incident MHD patients who enrolled in DaVita clinic over the same period within <3 month of dialysis start. The 18,707 incident MHD patients had a mean age of 63±15 years and included 45% women, 24% African Americans and 14% Hispanics. The SMR were the highest during the first several months, but decreased after 6 to 8 months and remained relatively stable during Year 2. The highest SMR was in the first month [1.87 (1.81 -1.94)], followed by Months 2, 3 and 4 with SMRs of 1.85 (1.78 -1.91), 1.40 (1.33-1.47), and 1.40 (1.33-1.47) respectively. The SMRs for months 12 and 24 were similar: 0.98 (0.9-1.05) and 0.96 (0.89-1.03), respectively.



Among incident MHD patients, mortality is up to 80% higher in the first few months, but it declines over the subsequent 6 to 8 months to reach a relatively steady state by the end of the first year. Interventions (such as RightStart and IMPACT) can improve survival during the first several months of dialysis therapy.