

**32. Life expectancy of women with lupus nephritis now approaches that of the general population**

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**Immunosuppressive treatment has changed the prognosis of Lupus nephritis over time, but improvement in prognosis is difficult to analyze in different historical periods, and should be better demonstrated in comparison with life expectancy of sex-and age-matched people. Long-term patient and renal survival of 90 patients diagnosed with Lupus nephritis at our center from 1968 to 2001 with a follow-up time of  $14 \pm 8$  years was retrospectively evaluated. Patient and kidney survival significantly increased over time. Multivariate analyses show that risks of patient and renal death decreased by 8% at each year of follow-up, and increased by more than 5 time in patients aged > 30 years at diagnosis. As only 14 patients were men, relative survival as compared to that of the sex- and age-matched general population of the Piedmont Region was calculated for the 76 women. Improvement in the survival of the cohort of women was seen at any time of follow-up: in particular, it was sharply lower in the first period (relative survival at 5, 10 and 15 years = 0.784, 0.665, and 0.620, respectively) and increased in the second (relative survival at 5, 10 and 15 years = 0.939, 0.921, and 0.850, respectively) nearly approaching that expected for the general population, i.e. 0.993, 0.983 and 0.967, respectively. Taken together, our data allow us to draw the conclusion that life expectancy in women with Lupus nephritis has improved over time, paralleling an improved awareness of the disease and a significant increase in steroid pulse therapy as induction/remission phase. Improvement in survival is for the first time demonstrated to cover the gap with life expectancy of the general population for women with Lupus nephritis.**

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