IN BRIEF

PROTEINURIA

Determining the presence of microalbuminuria in a first morning void is more reliable than analysis of spot urine samples. A team from The Netherlands demonstrated that the prevalence of microalbuminuria estimated using data from first morning voids was similar to the prevalence ascertained by measurement of 24 h urinary albumin excretion, the gold standard (but less practical) method for diagnosing microalbuminuria.

Original article Witte, E. C. *et al.* First morning voids are more reliable than spot urine samples to assess microalbuminuria. *J. Am. Soc. Nephrol.* **20**, 436–443 (2009).

MINERAL METABOLISM

Iron–magnesium hydroxycarbonate (Fermagate) shows promise in phase II testing as a calcium-free treatment for hyperphosphatemia in patients on chronic hemodialysis. Doses of 1 g or 2 g given three times daily for 21 days effectively reduced serum phosphate levels. The lower dose had an adverse-event profile comparable to that of placebo, although both doses increased predialysis serum magnesium level.

Original article McIntyre, C. W. *et al.* Iron–magnesium hydroxycarbonate (Fermagate): a novel non-calcium-containing phosphate binder for the treatment of hyperphosphatemia in chronic hemodialysis patients. *Clin. J. Am. Soc. Nephrol.* **4**, 401–409 (2009).

DIALYSIS

The addition of a novel induction assay for interleukin 1β to a classic method for determining the purity of dialysis water (the Limulus Amebocyte Lysate test) could improve detection of microbial contaminants. Glorieux and colleagues show that 10.3% of dialysates deemed 'pure' by classic methods and 9.1% of 'ultrapure' fluids elicited a proinflammatory response in the cytokine assay.

Original article Glorieux, G. *et al.* A novel bio-assay increases the detection yield of microbiological impurity of dialysis fluid, in comparison to the LAL-test. *Nephrol. Dial. Transplant.* **24**, 548–554 (2009).

TRANSPLANTATION

Rates of living-donor kidney transplantation have increased steadily in many countries over the past 10 years, according to researchers in Canada. An estimated 27,000 living-donor kidney transplantations are now performed worldwide each year, with the highest numbers taking place in the US, Brazil, Iran, Mexico and Japan; Saudi Arabia has the highest rate of living-donor kidney transplantations per million population, most of which involve unrelated donors.

Original article Horvat, L. D. *et al.* Global trends in the rates of living kidney donation. *Kidney Int.* doi:10.1038/ki.2009.20 (2009).