Reviewer's report

Title: The Relation of C-Reactive Protein to Chronic Kidney Disease in African Americans: The Jackson Heart Study

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Reviewer: vecihi batuman

Reviewer's report:

This is a straightforward study demonstrating a significant association between CKD and CRP. The relation held after mutivariable-adjusted analysis. The authors address the limitations of their study adequately and emphasize that the study population consist of African Americans only. While a limitation, this may also be an interesting aspect of their study, and may point to a unique vulnerability in this population. The authors convincingly argue that higher CRP levels are unlikely to be caused by renal insufficiency citing data that CRP levels are independent of kidney function. This is plausible because CRP, mw ~ 115,000, is unlikely to be filterable in the glomerulus in significant quantities.

The incidence of CKD (GFR < 60 ml/min/1.73 m²) was found at 5.9%, and this surprising because the prevalence of stage III CKD was estimated at 7.7% in the recent analysis by Coresh at al in the NHANES 1999-2004 population in a nationally representative sample of noninstitutionalized adults aged 20 years or older (JAMA.2007;298:2038-2047.) One would expect a higher incidence in this African American population. The authors may wish to elaborate on this apparent inconsistency.

Obviously, the conclusion that CKD is associated with inflammatory state would be more convincing had the investigators included additional markers of inflammation, such as IL-6, TNF-alpha, etc. If such data are available, it would significantly strengthen the manuscript.

A minor point is that the authors point out to the association between CRP and graft failure. What kind of "graft" is meant here?

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.