

SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

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UT SOUTHWESTERN RESEARCHERS DEVELOP NEW TEST FOR KIDNEY FUNCTION

DALLAS – September 23, 1998 – Researchers at UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas have developed a procedure that will allow physicians to accurately measure kidney function in a short period of time, enabling patients to spend less time in the clinic.

That's good news for 13-year-old kidney patient Elizabeth Callender who has spent the majority of her young life in a hospital. She suffered from focal segmental glomerular sclerosis, a degenerative kidney disease that necessitated a kidney transplant when she was 4 years old.

"The old test required me to spend five hours in the clinic, which made me miss a whole day of school," said the outgoing eighth grader, who attends Reed Elementary School in Duncanville. "Now the test is completed in an hour."

Dr. Mouin Seikaly, associate professor of pediatrics at UT Southwestern, will initiate a clinical study at Children's Medical Center of Dallas to test the procedure that provides a quantitative measurement of kidney function within 45 minutes in children. This study is in collaboration with Dr. Robert Star, professor of internal medicine at UT Southwestern, who is evaluating the test in adults.

"An accurate measurement is important when monitoring progression of kidney disease. The conventional methods using creatinine are prone to overestimate kidney function, which results in delayed therapeutic intervention," Seikaly said.

The new procedure involves injecting the patient with a small amount of radioactive isotope solution. After patients ingest water, the procedure estimates how effectively the kidney excretes waste products by testing how quickly the isotope disappears from the blood and appears in the urine.

A one year grant from Cypros Pharmaceutical Corp. is funding the study.

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