

# Routine Urine Examination is a Poor Man's Kidney Biopsy

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I am seeing so many patients in whom dozens of blood tests were done but the family physician has not asked for routine urine examination. It is worth stressing with a mid stream urine specimen specially examined fresh within 1 hour gives as good information as the kidney biopsy.

Presence of albumin in absence of pus

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cells indicates glomular nephritis specially if casts are seen in the microscopic urine examination.

Presence of RBCs specially in a male patient might point towards stone in the kidney or even cancer of the kidney. Urine infection is easily diagnosed though the culture will be required to see the organisms.

Therefore, make a habit of first writing routine urine examination and then battery of blood tests.

## **Socioeconomic adversity, disability, and death**

The independent association of socioeconomic status with physical functioning in old age is comparable to those for established non-communicable disease risk factors. Years of functioning lost at older ages generally exceeded the years of life lost, suggesting that an exclusive focus on morbidity and mortality may lead to an underestimation of the potential benefits of targeting poor socioeconomic circumstances and risk factors.

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## **Temporary quadrupling of inhaled steroids can reduce severe asthma exacerbations**

Asthma patients aged 16 years or over were recruited to the pragmatic, unblinded, randomised trial. The primary outcome was the time to a first severe asthma exacerbation, defined as treatment with systemic glucocorticoids or an unscheduled healthcare consultation for asthma. Nevertheless, the data that were collected were consistent with better asthma control in the quadrupling group.

From a GP perspective the study emphasises the value of personalised asthma self-management plans and opens a door to adaptation of these to include updating of inhaled steroids during exacerbations.

**Peter Saul, The Practitioner, April 2018, Vol 262, 7**