**NAME: OSUEKE JANE C.**

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**COLLEGE: MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES**

**DEPARTMENT: MEDICINE**

**COURSE: PHYSIOLOGY**

**COURSE CODE: PHS 303**

**QUESTION**

1. Discuss the role of kidney in glucose homeostasis?
2. Discuss the process of micturition?
3. Explain juxtaglomerular apparatus?
4. Discuss the role of kidney in regulation of blood pressure?
5. Discuss the role of kidney in calcium homeostasis?

**ANSWERS**

1. The major part played by the kidney in glucose homeostasis is glucose reabsorption. The kidneys’ contributions to maintaining glucose homeostasis are significant and include such functions as:

release of glucose into the circulation via gluconeogenesis

uptake of glucose from the circulation to satisfy their energy needs

reabsorption of glucose at the level of the proximal tubule.

Renal release of glucose into the circulation is the result of glycogenolysis and gluconeogenesis, respectively involving the breaking down and formation of glucose-6-phosphate from precursors (eg, lactate, glycerol, amino acids). With regard to renal reabsorption of glucose, the kidneys normally retrieve as much glucose as possible, rendering the urine virtually glucose free. The glomeruli filter from plasma approximately 180 grams of D-glucose per day, all of which is reabsorbed through glucose transporter proteins that are present in cell membranes within the proximal tubules. If the capacity of these transporters is exceeded, glucose appears in the urine. The process of renal glucose reabsorption is mediated by active (sodium-coupled glucose cotransporters) and passive (glucose transporters) transporters. In hyperglycemia, the kidneys may play an exacerbating role by reabsorbing excess glucose, ultimately contributing to chronic hyperglycemia, which in turn contributes to chronic glycemic burden and the risk of microvascular consequences.

1. Micturition is a process where urine is expelled from the body. It is brought about by reflex contraction of a special muscle called the detrusor muscle after voluntary relaxation of the sphincter muscle.

Micturition process consists of two phases:

* Storage phase
* Voiding phase

**Storage Phase**

The urinary bladder is a balloon-shaped, hollow, muscular, organ that acts as the storage organ for urine. The urinary bladder in a healthy urinary system can store up to 16 ounces of urine for 2 to 5 hours easily. The circular sphincter muscles prevent leakage of urine. They close tightly around the opening of the bladder into the tube (urethra) that allows the passage of urine outside the body.

**Voiding Phase**

When the bladder is filled with urine, the nerves in it are triggered, which in turn stimulates the need to urinate. The brain signals urinary bladder to contract. The receptors of the urinary bladder send a signal to the central nervous system, in response to which the nervous system sends a signal that incites the contraction of the urinary bladder. Through the urinary opening at the urethra, the urine is eliminated, and the process is called micturition. The neural mechanism involved is called the micturition reflex.

3) Juxtaglomerular Apparatus

The juxtaglomerular apparatus is a specialized structure formed by the distal convoluted tubule and the glomerular afferent arteriole. It is located near the vascular pole of the glomerulus and its main function is to regulate blood pressure and the filtration rate of the glomerulus. The macula densa is a collection of specialized epithelial cells in the distal convoluted tubule that detect sodium concentration of the fluid in the tubule. In response to elevated sodium, the macula densa cells trigger contraction of the afferent arteriole, reducing flow of blood to the glomerulus and the glomerular filtration rate. The juxtaglomerular cells, derived from smooth muscle cells, of the afferent arteriole secrete renin when blood pressure in the arteriole falls. Renin increases blood pressure via the renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system. Lacis cells, also called extraglomerular mesangial cells, are flat and elongated cells located near the macula densa. Their function remains unclear.

4) Increased pressure has a direct effect on the kidney

The formula:

 Q = (PA - PE) ÷ R

 Q = Flow, PA = Pressure in afferent arteriole, PE = Pressure in efferent arteriole, R = Resistance

Three mechanisms of Renal Regulation:

1. Pressure Diuresis
* As arteriolar blood pressure increases, so flow through the kidneys also increases - see above formula
* This increases filtration rate
* This increases urinary output
1. Pressure Natriuresis
* If renal perfusion pressure is increased then sodium excretion increases, i.e. sodium excretion increases when blood pressure increases
* If more sodium is excreted less water is reabsorbed therefore the ECF volume decreases and blood pressure decreases.
* The actual mechanism is not clear but it is thought to involve a direct effect of the pressure on the renal interstitium.
1. Renin-Angiotensin-Aldosterone System
* Specialized cells in the distal tubule called the macula densa sense the concentration of sodium and chloride.
* If blood pressure falls there is a reduction in concentration of sodium and chloride in the distal tubule which is sensed by the macula densa.
* The macula densa releases prostaglandins which act on the juxtaglomerular apparatus which releases renin into the bloodstream.
* The drop in blood pressure is also detected by baroreceptors in the aortic arch, carotid sinus and the afferent renal arteriole which stimulates renin release by the juxtaglomerular apparatus.
* Renin cleaves angiotensinogen into angiotensin 1 which in turn is cleaved by Angiotensin Converting Enzyme (ACE) into angiotensin 2.
* Angiotensin 2 is a potent vasoconstrictor and also stimulates the adrenal cortex to release aldosterone.
* Aldosterone acts on the distal tubules and collecting ducts in the kidney causing retention of sodium and water.
* Blood pressure increases.

5) The kidney is critically important in calcium homeostasis. Under normal blood calcium concentrations, almost all of the calcium that enters glomerular filtrate is reabsorbed from the tubular system back into blood, which preserves blood calcium levels. If tubular reabsorption of calcium decreases, calcium is lost by excretion into urine.