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17/MHS01/288

1. The kidney has an important role in ensuring the energy needs during fasting periods. This organ has a vital role in absorbing the entire quantity of the filtered glucose Having a glomerular filtration rate of 180 liters per day, it filters approximately 180 grams of glucose per day, bringing its contribution in maintaining normal fasting plasma glucose (FPG) levels . The reabsorption of glucose is ensured by the sodium-glucose cotransporter (SGLT) 2, responsible for the reabsorption of 90% of glucose, and SGLT1, that reabsorbs the remaining glucose

The kidneys are involved in maintaining glucose homeostasis through three different mechanisms: gluconeogenesis; glucose uptake from the blood for its own energy requests and reabsorption into the general circulation of glucose from glomerular filtrate in order to preserve energy

**Renal gluconeogenesis**

From the point of view of glucose utilization, the kidney is considered as 2 separate organs; the renal medulla is characterized mainly by glucose utilization and the renal cortex is responsible for glucose release. The separation of these activities represents the consequence of differences in the distribution of numerous enzymes along the nephron. The cells in the renal medulla can use only glucose for their needs (like the brain) and they have enzymes capable of glucose-phosphorylation and glycolysis. They can therefore phosphorylate important amounts of glucose and accumulate glycogen but, because these cells do not have glucose-6-phosphatase or any other gluconeogenic enzymes, they are unable to release glucose into the bloodstream. Moreover, the cells in the renal cortex have gluconeogenic enzymes and they can produce and release glucose into the circulation. However these cells cannot synthesize glycogen because they have little phosphorylating capacity .

After a 16-h overnight fast, approximately 10 µmol ⁄ (kg /min) of glucose is released into the circulation. Almost 50% of this is the result of glycogenolysis from the liver stocks and the other half is produced by liver and kidney gluconeogenesis. The renal cortex (like the liver) contains gluconeogenic enzymes and it can synthesize glucose-6-phosphate from precursors (lactate, glutamine, glycerol and alanine). Because it contains glucose-6-phosphatase, it is able to release glucose into the blood stream and the human liver and kidneys are the only organs that can perform gluconeogenesis. Therefore, after an overnight fast, the liver produces 75–80% of glucose released into the circulation and the remaining 20–25% is derived from the kidneys.

**Glucose reabsorption**

Apart from the important role in gluconeogenesis and the role of renal cortex in glucose uptake, the kidneys contribute to glucose homeostasis by filtering and reabsorbing glucose. In normal conditions, the kidneys can reabsorb as much glucose as possible, the result being a virtually glucose free urine. Approximately 180 grams of glucose are filtered by the glomeruli from plasma, daily but all of this quantity is reabsorbed through glucose transporters that are present in cell membranes located in the proximal tubules

These glucose transporters have a limited capacity of reabsorption. If this capacity is exceeded, glucose usually appears in the urine. The tubular maximum for glucose (TmG), the term used for the maximum capacity, can vary from 260 to 350 mg/min/1.73 m2 in healthy subjects. It corresponds to blood glucose levels of 180-200 mg/dL . When the blood glucose is very high and the TmG is reached, the transporters cannot reabsorb all the glucose and glucosuria occurs (Figure 2). Nevertheless, there can be slight differences between the nephrons and the inaccurate nature of biological systems may potentially lead to the development of glucosuria when blood glucose is below TmG. Glucosuria may occur at lower plasma glucose levels in certain conditions of hyperfiltration (eg. pregnancy), but as a consequence of hyperfiltration and not of significant hyperglycemia .

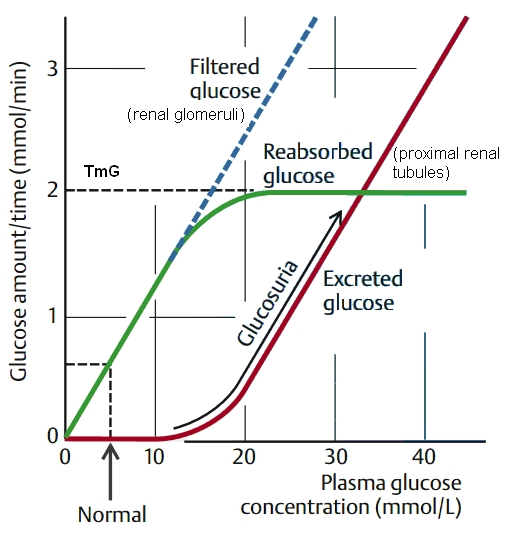


Figure 2.

Renal glucose handling. TmG, transport maximum for glucose.

1. **Micturition**

It is the process of expelling urine 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.

**Clinical correlates**

* **Detrusor Instability –**This is a condition where the detrusor muscle contracts without any apparent reason. This muscle is responsible for contracting the bladder and help with the micturition process. As a result, detrusor instability results in urinary incontinence.
* **Urinary Retention –** This condition is characterized by the inability to empty the bladder completely. The onset may be gradual or sudden. The causes can range from a blockage in the urethra, nerve problems and weak bladder muscles.
* **Spinal Cord Trauma –**Injuries to the spinal cord, specifically the tenth thoracic vertebra (T10) can cause the bladder to be overactive or cause urinary incontinence.

The **juxtaglomerular apparatus** (also known as the **juxtaglomerular complex**) is a structure in the kidney that regulates the function of each nephron, the functional units of the kidney. The juxtaglomerular apparatus is named because it is next to (juxta-[[1]](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juxtaglomerular_apparatus#cite_note-1)) the glomerulus.  It is found between afferent arteriole and the distal convoluted tubule of the same nephron. This location is critical to its function in regulating renal blood flow and glomerular filtration rate.

The juxtaglomerular apparatus consists of three types of cells:

1. the macula densa, a part of the distal convoluted tubule of the same nephron
2. juxtaglomerular cells, (also known as granular cells) which secrete renin
3. extraglomerular mesangial cells

### Juxtaglomerular cells

Renin is produced by juxtaglomerular cells. These cells are similar to epithelium and are located in the tunica media of the afferent arterioles as they enter the glomeruli. The juxtaglomerular cells secrete renin in response to:

* Stimulation of the beta-1 adrenergic receptor
* Decrease in renal perfusion pressure (detected directly by the granular cells)
* Decrease in NaCl concentration at the macula densa, often due to a decrease in glomerular filtration rate

### Extraglomerular mesangial cells

Extraglomerular mesangial cells are located in the junction between the afferent and efferent arterioles. These cells have a contractile property similar to vascular smooth muscles and thus play a role in “regulating GFR” by altering the vessel diameter. Renin is also found in these cells.

### Macula densa

At the point where the afferent arterioles enter the glomerulus and the efferent arteriole leaves it, the tubule of the nephron touches the arterioles of the glomerulus from which it rose. At this location, in the wall of the distal convoluted tubule, there is a modified region of tubular epithelium called the macula densa. Cells in the macula densa respond to changes in the sodium chloride levels in the distal tubule of the nephron via the tubuloglomerular feedback (TGF) loop.

The macula densa's detection of elevated sodium chloride, which leads to an increase in GFR, is based on the concept of purinergic signaling. An increase in the salt concentration causes several cell signals to eventually cause the adjacent afferent arteriole to constrict. This decreases the amount of blood coming from the afferent arterioles to the glomerular capillaries, and therefore decreases the amount of fluid that goes from the glomerular capillaries into the Bowman's space (the glomerular filtration rate (GFR)).

When there is a decrease in the sodium concentration, less sodium is reabsorbed in the macular densa cells. The cells increase the production of nitric oxide and Prostaglandins to vasodilate the afferent arterioles and increase renin release.

1. **ROLE OF KIDNEY IN BLOOD PRESSURE REGULATION**

# The kidney helps regulate blood pressure through the RAS system ( renin-angiotensin system

The renin-angiotensin system or RAS regulates blood pressure and fluid balance in the body. When blood volume or sodium levels in the body are low, or blood potassium is high, cells in the kidney release the enzyme, renin. Renin converts angiotensinogen, which is produced in the liver, to the hormone angiotensin I. An enzyme known as ACE or angiotensin-converting enzyme found in the lungs metabolizes angiotensin I into angiotensin II. Angiotensin II causes blood vessels to constrict and blood pressure to increase. Angiotensin II stimulates the release of the hormone aldosterone in the adrenal glands, which causes the renal tubules to retain sodium and water and excrete potassium. Together, angiotensin II and aldosterone work to raise blood volume, blood pressure and sodium levels in the blood to restore the balance of sodium, potassium, and fluids. If the renin-angiotensin system becomes overactive, consistently high blood pressure results.

1. **Renal Calcium regulation**

**The kidneys play a role in the concentration of calcium in the body.** When the blood calcium levels drop, proteins in the parathyroid glands that detect calcium send signals to help secrete parathyroid hormones, or PTH. This hormone helps convert vitamin D into its active form known as calcitriol.

. Calcitriol in the kidneys increases the absorption of calcium. **Both PTH and calcitriol help release calcium in bones by activating osteoclasts.** These cells help reabsorb calcium, decreasing calcium excretion in the urine, allowing it to be reabsorbed in the kidneys. **When calcium is at a normal levels, parathyroid glands cease secretion of PTH and excess calcium is expelled in the urine, which can lead to problems in the kidneys if your calcium level is high.**