

**An Anatomical Evaluation of Variability in Morphology of the Renal Vein:
An Observational Study****Abhilasha Kumari**Assistant Professor, Department of Anatomy, Gouri Devi Institute of Medical Sciences and Hospital,
Durgapur, West Bengal, India

Received: 02-03-2023 Revised: 21-04-2023 Accepted: 29-04-2023

Corresponding Author: Dr. Abhilasha Kumari

Conflict of interest: Nil

Abstract**Aim:** The aim of the present study was to study the variability in morphology of the renal vein and to measure length of renal vein and to observe the variations in renal vein.**Methods:** The dissection was done in 30 embalmed cadavers in the Department of Anatomy. They included 20 male and 10 female cadavers. This was cross-sectional study. They were collected from the dissection hall of department of Human Anatomy of medical college**Results:** Tributaries that emerge from the kidney and join to form renal vein are called primary tributaries. These were present in 9 in right and 12 in left specimens. Statistically significant association was not found between presence of primary tributary of renal vein and side. Statistically significant difference found between length of renal vein of right and left side. Average length was more on left side (62.44 mm) than that of right side (26.98 mm).**Conclusion:** Detailed knowledge of variations of these vessels will definitely improve outcome of various urological, renal transplantation and laparoscopic surgeries. This knowledge will be of immense help to radiologists and oncologists who are dealing with this region. Also, a detailed knowledge and understanding of major congenital anomalies of the renal veins variations will provides safety guidelines for endovascular procedures.**Keywords:** Renal vein, Tributaries, Retro aortic left renal veinThis is an Open Access article that uses a funding model which does not charge readers or their institutions for access and distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>) and the Budapest Open Access Initiative (<http://www.budapestopenaccessinitiative.org/read>), which permit unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided original work is properly credited.**Introduction**

Both renal arteries originate from the lateral abdominal aorta. They originate in the L1-L2 intervertebral disc below the superior mesenteric artery. Renal arteries from embryonic lateral splanchnics. [1] Accessory renal arteries are embryonic vessels that continue after the definitive renal arteries develop. In surgery or corpse dissection, accessory renal veins are typically seen.

Around 8th week, bilateral cardinal venous system and channels become unilateral right inferior vena cava. Primarily two renal veins on both sides as ventral and dorsal plane, later union of both tributaries forms a single vessel, while its persistence creates accessory renal veins. [2] Normally, left renal vein terminates anterior to aorta. Retro-aortic left renal vein is caused by vein persistence posterior to aorta. Persistence of renal collar or circum aortic renal vein collar describes this sight. The anatomical differences of renal arteries affect surgery. Eustachi described anastomoses between renal arteries in the sixteenth century. [3] Kidney embryology is complex, so

renal vasculature can vary, especially accessory renal artery origin. [4]

Both kidneys' hila link to the inferior vena cava via its renal veins on both sides. The right vein drains the right kidney, while the left drains the left kidney, gonads, and suprarenal gland. [5] Similarly, variations in the anatomy of renal vein is very common due to the complex development of Inferior vena cava & its tributaries. Venography, surgery, and autopsies often reveal renal vein variations. [6] Left renal vein (7.5cm) is three times longer than right (2.5cm). [7] Variations in left renal vein is significant in renal transplants, since left kidney is preferred to be transplanted mostly due to the fact that left renal vein is longer than right. [8]

A study by Baptista-Silva et al. [9] found variations in the left renal vein (LRV) and double and triple right renal veins (RRVs). Senecail et al. [10] suggested variations of the LRV may be problematic for clinicians interpreting abdominal imaging scans. Left kidney & left renal artery/ vein

is the preferred and favoured side for donor nephrectomies to the renal transplant surgeons. In the present situation, of increasing number of operating procedures like renal transplants, vascular surgery, aneurysmorrhaphy, retroperitoneal surgery & other diagnostic interventions, the pre-operative knowledge of renal vascular variations play a very significant role. Similarly, variations in the anatomy of renal vein are very common due to the complex development of Inferior vena cava & its tributaries. Many times renal vein variations are common incidental finding during venography, operation or autopsy. [11] Variations in left renal vein is significant in renal transplants, since left kidney is preferred to be transplanted mostly due to the fact that left renal vein is longer than right. [12]

The aim of the present study was to study the variability in morphology of the renal vein and to measure length of renal vein and to observe the variations in renal vein.

Materials and Methods

The dissection was done in 30 embalmed cadavers in the Department of Anatomy, Gouri Devi Institute of Medical Sciences and Hospital, Durgapur, West Bengal, India for two years. They included 20 male and 10 female cadavers. This was cross-sectional study. They were collected from the dissection hall of department of Human Anatomy of medical colleges. Presence of abnormal abdominal growth or mass, evidence of renal surgical scar or trauma on the abdomen was included in exclusion criteria.

Each cadaver was kept in supine position. Cadavers were dissected according to guidelines of 'Cunningham's Manual of Practical Anatomy. [13]

1. A midline skin incision from the xiphi sternum to the pubic symphysis, encircling the umbilicus was made. The incision from xiphoid process along costal margin to point on the mid axillary line was made. A skin incision from pubic symphysis to anterior superior iliac spine was made. This was

extended posteriorly to a point on the mid axillary line.

2. The skin was reflected from the medial to the lateral aspect in four quadrants towards mid axillary line. Anterior abdominal wall was dissected sequentially. Muscles of the anterior abdominal wall were incised and reflected laterally.

3. Peritoneal cavity was opened and various organs of the abdomen were removed and simultaneously renal vessels and their tributaries and branches were identified. Search was made for any variation. The renal vessels were studied by using simple blunt dissection.

4. All measurements were obtained using a Vernier caliper. Photographed records were made. With the dissection, we liberated the kidney from the fat shell and separated the blood vessels from it towards the large blood vessels.

5. Presence of primary tributaries was noted. These tributaries emerged from kidney and join renal vein. [14]

6. Length of renal vein was measured using Vernier caliper between:

(a) Point at renal hilum or when extra hilar primary tributaries were present, the point where it joined with renal vein

(b) Point of entry of renal vein into the inferior vena cava

7. Also any variation in relation to renal vein was looked upon.

Statistical Analysis

The collected data regarding length was entered into the Microsoft excel sheet and analyzed statistically by Epo info 7.2.5. Values were reported as in percentage, mean and standard deviation. Statistical analysis of right and left side specimen was carried out by using Fisher Exact Test, T Test, P Value.

Results

Table 1: Number of renal veins having extra hilar primary tributaries

| Primary tributaries | Right renal vein N (%) | Left renal vein N (%) | P Value |
|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|---------|
| Present | 9 (30) | 12 (40) | 0.2252 |
| Absent | 21 (70) | 18 (60) | |

Tributaries that emerge from the kidney and join to form renal vein are called primary tributaries. These were present in 9 in right and 12 in left specimens. Statistically significant association was not found between presence of primary tributary of renal vein and side.

Table 2: Measurement of length of renal vein in millimeter

| Renal Vein | Maximum Length | Minimum Length | Mean Length | S.D. | P value |
|------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|------|---------|
| Right | 46.02 | 11.17 | 26.98 | 2.18 | <0.001 |
| Left | 76.66 | 42.16 | 62.44 | 2.44 | |

Statistically significant difference found between length of renal vein of right and left side.

Table 3: Average measurement of range of length of renal vein in millimeter

| | |
|---|-------|
| Average length of right renal vein | 26.98 |
| Average length of left renal vein | 62.44 |
| Average obsolete difference between two | 35.46 |

Average length was more on left side (62.44 mm) than that of right side (26.98 mm).

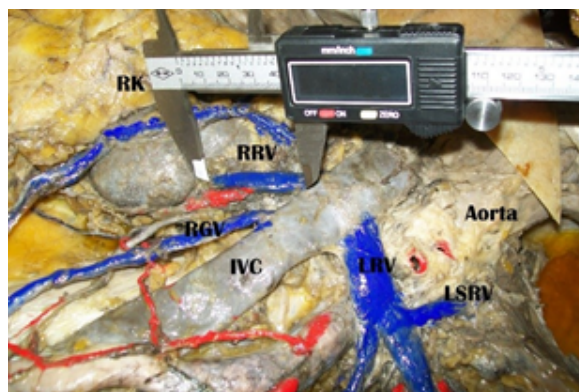


Figure 1: An anterior view of an abdomen illustrating measurement of the right renal vein using a vernier caliper (RK- right kidney), RRV- right renal vein, RGV- right gonadal vein, IVC- inferior vena cava, LSRV- left suprarenal vein, LRV- left renal vein)

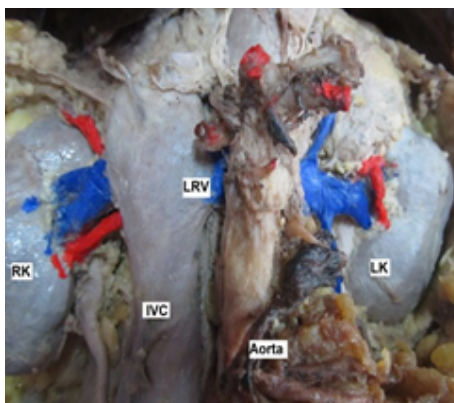


Figure 2: Anterior view of abdomen showing retroaortic left renal vein (Aorta: abdominal aorta; LRV: left renal vein; RK: right kidney; IVC: inferior vena cava; LK: left kidney)

Discussion

Right renal vein (2.5cm) is three times shorter than left (7.5cm). [7] Senecail et al. suggest that left renal vein abnormalities may complicate abdominal CT scan interpretation. [15] In most investigations, renal artery and renal vein changes dominate kidney blood supply. An era of renal transplantations and conservative renal procedures requires a deep understanding of kidney architecture and blood supply variation. The lateral abdominal aorta gives rise to the renal arteries, each paired. [16] Pairs of renal veins feed into the inferior vena cava. Both vessels enter through the renal hilum. If present, supplementary renal vessels might enter the kidney by the hilum or surface. Polar arteries arrive from the higher or lower pole. [17]

About 30% of its existence involves renal artery variations. [16] These are auxiliary or aberrant renal arteries. Accessory renal arteries travel via the hilum with typical renal arteries. Aberrant arteries enter the kidney by penetrating its material, either upper or lower pole as polar arteries. Every variance may be explained embryologically. Primary kidney tributaries form renal vein. These were in 9 right and 12 left specimens. Extra hilar major tributaries were absent in 66% of cases. No significant correlation was identified between renal vein primary tributary and side. Right and left renal vein lengths differ statistically. Left had a longer average length (62.44 mm) than right (26.98 mm). The circum-aortic left renal vein, extra renal veins, retro-aortic, and plexiform left renal veins were detected. Additional renal veins were most prevalent. Renal vein fluctuation rates varied

widely in prior research. Left side veins are rarer than right. [18]

Singla et al (2010) stated that the retro aortic left renal vein may be compressed between the lumbar spine and the aorta leading to left renal venous hypertension. [19] The surgical significance of such variants may affect use the long left renal vein for venous reconstruction in hepato pancreatic surgery and mobilization procedures gets restricted. [20] The accessory or aberrant renal arteries may be important for the clinicians, since they have a vital role to play in causation of hydronephrosis, renal transplantations and in micro vascular surgeries. Variations in renal veins are usually discovered during venography or any operative procedures. Renal arterial variations are more frequently observed than renal veins, which account for about 18% of the cases. [21] Anupama et al., reported various congenital variations of renal veins, in which the study described about supernumerary renal vein, in which presence of an additional vein arising from the hilum of kidney and draining into inferior vena cava. Out of 30 cadavers which were studied, they described a right side supernumerary renal vein in 10 cases and in only one case, they described a bilateral renal vein variation. [22]

Conclusion

Understanding vascular variances will enhance urology, renal transplantation, and laparoscopic procedures. This understanding will greatly benefit radiologists and oncologists treating this location. Understanding significant renal vein congenital defects would also inform endovascular procedure safety.

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