

Abstract:

Patients with chronic non-thyroid illness (NTI) generally show biochemical features of hypothyroidism despite their being clinically euthyroid. Using assays that employ the antibody coated tubes technique, we measured thyroid hormone levels in 52 patients with chronic renal failure. 30 of the patients were on conservative management while 22 were on regular haemodialysis (HD) for a mean period of 14.2 +/- 9.9 months. The findings were compared to those of 14 healthy controls. All patients were clinically euthyroid. Only 3 patients on HD had goitres. The mean value of total thyroxine (TT4) total triiodo thyronine (TT3), free thyroxine (FT4) and the free triiodothyronine (FT3) were low in patients compared with controls (P less than 0.01). The mean basal thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH) levels were significantly higher in patients than in controls (P less than 0.001). There were no significant differences in all parameters between the patients on conservative management and those on haemodialysis (P greater than 0.05). Although all patients were clinically euthyroid, the biochemical features suggest hypothyroidism.