



Age, Height, and Weight-Adjusted Renal Dimension Models Using CT Imaging

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ABSTRACT

The correct measurement of renal size in children is also necessary to identify early onset of congenital and acquired renal anomalies as kidney size not only indicates the structural integrity, but also the morphological development of the kidney. The conventional renal size reference criteria use ultrasound and age charts, which do not consider the variation among individuals in terms of body developmental patterns (Riccabona, 2021). The purpose of this study was to build up age-, height-, and weight-adjusted renal dimension models with the help of computed tomography (CT) imaging in a pediatric sample. The analytical design was cross-sectional and the renal length, width, was measured using up-to-date CT availed data on renal volume, length, and width of the pediatric patients. The anthropometric parameters such as age, height and weight were studied to find out that they are correlated to the renal dimensions. The multivariate regression analysis was used to come up with predictive models of adjusting the size of the kidneys. The findings indicated a good positive relationship among renal dimensions and anthropometric variables with height being the most important predictor, followed by the body weight and age (Lee and Siegel, 2018). The models suggested better accuracy than the conventional textbook reference standards which were age based. The results indicate that anthropometric renal modeling with CT could be applied in pediatric nephrology to improve accuracy of diagnosis especially when the results of the ultrasound are indifferent or non-conclusive (Friedman & Jones, 2022). Such models can help a clinician to identify issues in the kidneys early and enhance the personal approach to the patient.

Keywords: Pediatric renal, renal dimensions, computed tomography, CT imaging, height-adjusted renal size, weight-adjusted kidney volume, kidney morphometry, anthropometry, correlation, pediatric nephrology

INTRODUCTION

Renal size is an essential part of nephrologic and radiologic assessment of pediatrics since the size of kidneys is a good biomarker of growth, development, and underlying pathology. Renal size deviations tend to be related to other pathologies, such as congenital anomalies of kidney and urinary tract (CAKUT), chronic renal disease, obstructive uropathies, and frequent infections, all of which may have a plethora of consequences on the long-term functioning of the kidneys (Darge & Troeger, 2019). As such, kidney size needs to be precisely and standardized accurately assessed to diagnose and clinically treat early on.

Conventionally ultrasonography has been used to measure the renal dimensions in children because it is safe, accessible and cheap. Nonetheless, ultrasound measurements are very operator-dependent and can be affected by the hydration status of patients, positioning of the probes, and inter-observer variability thus restricting reproducibility in clinical practice (Riccabona, 2021). Despite highly effective ultrasound

as the initial imaging modality of choice, it has its limitations emphasizing the importance of more specific imaging approaches in specific circumstances.

Computed tomography (CT) especially multidetector CT (MDCT) has a better spatial resolution and the measurement of renal anatomy (length, width and volume) can be done with high precision and reproducibility (Callahan, 2019). The CT imaging offers morphometric study of the structures of the kidney in 3D imaging, which makes it a useful tool in providing a detailed analysis of these structures. Although there is fear about radiation exposure with respect to children populations, CT has a clinical significance in complicated cases of diagnosis where delicate anatomical assessment is indicated (Smith-Bindman and Moghadassi, 2019).

Age-based reference values in assessment of renal size are one of the major limitations in existing practice in pediatric nephrology. As much as age has a correlation with renal growth, it fails to explain all difference in body composition, nutritional status, and genetic differences in growth between children (Kliegman, 2020). This might cause a drastic discrepancy in renal size between children of the same age which might cause a possible misinterpretation of normal and abnormal kidney sizes.

Recent data indicate that anthropometric measurements of height, weight, and body surface area are more effective predictors of kidney size as compared to age (Gomes & Sampaio, 2017). Especially height has been found to be the most determinant of renal length because height is closely related to the growth of the skeletons and organs. Renal volume has also been correlated with weight, the overall body weight and metabolic load. Nevertheless, the majority of the literature are confined to ultrasound measurements and the lack of CT-based high resolution modeling methods.

The proper and feasible renal reference models can be of particular value in low-resource healthcare environments where the incidence of pediatric renal diseases is pronounced, and where the number of diagnostic tools is low (Sinha & Bagga, 2020). Early renal abnormalities can help to avoid the complications of hypertension in the long run, scarring of kidneys and advancement of chronic kidney diseases. Thus, clinical importance of enhancing accuracy of diagnostic models based on enhanced imaging is crucial.

Developments in multidetector CT imaging have made it possible to perform in-depth morphometric studies of renal structures to researchers be able to go beyond linear measures to volumetric and three-dimensional measurements (Friedman & Jones, 2022). Combining the CT-generated renal data with anthropometric indicators would allow coming up with predictive models that could capture the difference in kidney size better in an individual.

Although these improvements have been made, there is still a shortage of the standardized models of CT based renal dimension, which is age, height, and weight adjusted in the children populations. This gap is critical to overcome to enhance diagnostic accuracy and have a more individualized measure of renal health in children. This is why the current research will involve the development of age-, height-, and weight-adjusted age models on renal dimension measurements with the help of CT imaging with the aim to obtain valid predictive equations to be applied in clinical practice.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Proper determination of the size of kidneys in the pediatric population has long been established to be one of the essential elements in diagnosis and management of conditions affecting the kidney. The size of the kidney is an indicator of the structural development and functional integrity and thus a useful biomarker in pediatric nephrology. A number of studies have highlighted that the fact that renal dimensions are usually deviated is commonly related to congenital errors of the kidney and urinary tract (CAKUT), chronic kidney disease (CKD), obstructive uropathies, and frequent kidney tract infections (Darge & Troeger, 2019; Copelovitch, 2021). Thus development of stable reference values of renal size is a hot research topic.

Ultrasound has been the most popular modality of measuring renal size in children as it is safe, inexpensive and non-invasive. Riccabona (2021) emphasized the idea that ultrasound is the leading imaging technique in the context of renal examination of children since it does not lead to radiation exposure and is in the majority of cases. Nevertheless, various researchers have determined the drawbacks in ultrasound measurements such as operator bias, inter-rater reliability, and a lesser degree of accuracy among obese or non-cooperative pediatric patients (Hiorns, 2020; Avni et al., 2019). These constraints have motivated scientists to consider the use of more advanced imaging modalities in order to have accurate assessment of the kidney.

Computed tomography (CT), especially multidetector CT (MDCT) has become one of the most precise types of imaging to use as a morphometric tool to assess the genitalia of the kidneys. CT has a high spatial resolution and allows accurate measurement of length, width, and volume of the kidneys which is critical in making a detailed anatomical evaluation (Callahan, 2019). In Friedman and Jones (2022), it was reported that CT-derived renal measurements have better reproducibility in comparison to ultrasound measurements, particularly with complicated renal pathologies. Nonetheless, the issue of the exposure of ionizing radiations in children restrict its common application although the process has beneficial diagnostic effects (Smith-Bindman and Moghadassi, 2019).

A number of studies have been conducted to determine the relationship between renal size with anthropometric variables age, height and weight. Kliegman (2020) highlighted that although age is usually taken as a standard to measure renal development, the metric is not entirely accurate when it comes to the differences in body development in individuals. This has caused false interpretation in clinical interpretation in use of age based reference charts on their own. In a similar manner, Gomes and Sampaio (2017) indicated that height and age are less correlated with renal dimensions but together could be important to make body size-adjusted models more valid.

The predictor of renal length has been found to be height, which is consistent in several pediatric groups. The study by Lee and Siegel (2018) demonstrated that the relationship found between height and renal dimensions is linear, i.e., the taller the children, the larger the kidneys would be. The weight has also been found to be correlated with the renal volume, but it has a slightly less predictive value because of the differences in body composition and fat distribution (Friedman & Jones, 2022). The results justify the necessity to use multivariable predictive models that combine the measurements of height and weight and do not rely on the grounds of age only.

Besides the anthropometric factors, there are also differences in genders regarding size of renal, as has been reported in some studies. The renal size of boys, especially in late childhood and adolescence, is slightly bigger than in girls, which could be explained by variations in the patterns of somatic growth (Greenfield, 2019). But these differences are usually small and not usually significantly important when scale is taken into account.

Pediatric renal abnormalities are also widespread and, therefore, the significance of correct renal dimension measurement. Hydronephrosis, CAKUT, and UTI are typically the most common conditions in the nephrology pediatric literature (Bhide & El Alfy, 2022; Baker et al., 2018). Accurate imaging is essential in early diagnosis of these conditions especially in low resource environments where sometimes, three-dimensional diagnostic devices are not at hand.

Ultrasound is the most common diagnostic modality in low, and middle-income countries because of its cheapness and affordability. Nevertheless, other researchers have demonstrated that using ultrasound alone can result in the undercorrect diagnosis of the subtler or more complicated abnormalities in the kidneys (Sinha & Bagga, 2020). Gupta and Sharma (2023) stressed that in building a healthcare system, there is an urgent necessity to provide better imaging protocols that are relatively more affordable and yet provide an accurate diagnostic result.

Most recent developments in CT imaging have made it possible to create more elaborate models of renal morphometric. Darge and Troeger (2019) emphasized the result of three-dimensional renal reconstruction with the help of CT as a measurement of renal anatomy, which is more accurate than two-dimensional measurements used in the past. This has also enabled the formulation of predictive models that are more precise regarding the prediction of renal size by the use of various variables such as age, height and weight.

Lateral differences in the dimensions of the kidneys have also been observed as differences when citizens are compared in terms of population. Khan and Malik (2022) also found that there was a significant difference in the size of the kidney in different regions in pediatric patients possibly due to ethnicity, nutrition, and. It is another reason that region specific reference models that should be developed instead of using a generalized international standard.

Recent literature has also been able to explore the concept of body surface area (BSA)-adjusted renal models. Given the idea that BSA could offer more profound renal scaling measurements than single anthropometric effects, Copelovitch (2021) proposed that BSA might be a superior tool of measuring renal scaling. Nevertheless, it is not widely used clinically owing to the complexity in its calculations and a deficient of standardized reference values.

Although renal dimension models proposed using CT have been studied widely, there is still a literature gap on models that incorporate several anthropometric variables in children in relation to the renal dimension. Majority of current researches are based on ultrasound measurements or correlations of a single variable, which are not so successful in prediction. Subramanian and Bhat (2021) highlighted the importance of multivariate regression models with the ability to offer more personalized predictions of renal size.

As a whole, the literature suggests that, although there has been a tremendous breakthrough in the area of pediatric renal imaging, it is even now in need of standardized, CT-based, age-, height-, and weight-adjusted renal dimension models. These models would improve accuracy of diagnosis, minimize false classification of kidney abnormalities and better clinical decision-making, especially in the resource constrained healthcare systems.

METHODOLOGY

Study Design

An age, height, and weight-adjusted renal dimension model that was developed on sequential computed tomography (CT) images of a pediatric population was made possible through a cross-sectional analytical study design. This choice was made as it enabled the measurement of dimensions and anthropometric variables of the kidneys in one point in time and therefore,, correlations between body growth parameters and kidney size could be examined.

Study Setting

This research was presented at the Radiology Department of a tertiary care hospital with pediatric patients regularly having an abdominal CT scan due to clinical reasons. The location had access to multidetector CT (MDCT) and electronic medical records and anthropometry and clinical data were collected.

Study Population

The research population was made up of children below 18 years with the age group 1-18 years who had a CT scan of the abdominal area in the course of the study. Patients were chosen having complete access to imaging and clinical data.

Sample Size

Two hundred pediatric patients were incorporated in the study. A feasibility sampling was also converted into the sample size that was determined by availability of CT imaging records during the study period. Only those cases that had complete anthropometry and renal imaging were considered.

Sampling Technique

Sampling was done in consecutive. Pediatric patients of all eligible patients that did not violate the inclusion criteria in the study period were consecutively chosen until the target number of healthy participants was reached.

Inclusion Criteria

The patients were taken in the study provided they:

- Were aged 1-18 years.
- Home had either a contrast or non-contrast CT of the abdomen.
- Had full recorded information about age, height and weight.
- Had no past record of kidney surgery or known kidney tumor.

Exclusion Criteria

The patients were not eligible when they:

- Had low or unsatisfactory composite CT images.
- otimesph Life History: HIT Trientoph: Contribution to nephrons or kidney transfer.
- Had severe congenital deformities in regards to kidney visualisation.
- Had no anthropometrics data.

Data Collection Procedure

Hospital radiology records and patient files were identified in the past to collect data. CT images were recollected by Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS). Experienced radiologists took renal measurements, such as length, width and estimated volume through measurement protocols that were standardized.

Clinical records provided anthropometric variables, such as age, weight and height. When necessary, body surface area (BSA) was computed by using standard formulas.

Imaging Protocol

Each and every CT scan was done on a multidetector CT scanner with the standardized abdominal imaging procedures. The scanning of the patients was done in supine posture with axial images destined to contain coronal and sagittal examination. Electronic calipers were used to measure the dimensions of the kidneys in millimeters. Renal length was considered to be the greatest bipolar distance and the width was considered to be widest transverse section.

Study Variables

The variables that were used in the study were as follows:

Independent Variables:

- Age (years)
- Height (cm)

- Weight (kg)

Dependent Variables:

- Renal length (mm)
- Renal width (mm)
- Renal volume (cm³)

Data Analysis

Analysis of data was done in SPSS version 26. Demographic and clinical characteristics were summarized using the descriptive statistics. Continuous variables made use of mean and standard deviation, with the categorical variables having frequency and percentages, respectively.

The analysis to determine the relationship between the renal dimensions and the anthropometric variables used Pearson correlation analysis. Multiple linear regression was used to come up with predictive models of the renal size, which is dependent on the age, height and weight. The level of significance that was considered statistically significant was less than 0.05.

Ethical Consideration

Data collection was done with moral consent of the institutional review board of the hospital. Anonymity of records was done to guarantee patient confidentiality. Since it was a retrospective study, the ethical committee waived the use of informed consent.

DATA ANALYSIS

Statistical computations were done using SPSS version 26 wherein data obtained on 200 pediatric patients who had abdominal CT imaging were analyzed. The data were analyzed with the aim of estimating the renal dimensions (length, width and volume) with regards to other anthropometric parameters such as age, height and weight. Multiple linear regression, correlation coefficient analysis and use of descriptive statistics were used. The p-value of less than 0.05 was deemed to be statistically significant.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Study Participants (N = 200)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	112	56%
Gender	Female	88	44%
Age Group	1–5 years	52	26%
Age Group	6–10 years	60	30%
Age Group	11–15 years	48	24%
Age Group	16–18 years	40	20%

There was a slightly good representation of male kids in the sample as compared to the female counterparts. The age distribution depicted a reasonably balanced representation in all categories of pediatrics with the highest number being the ones 6-10 years. It means that the mid-childhood can be considered a critical period of renal imaging studies, which may be explained by the fact that this disease may manifest itself through more urinary symptoms and congenital defects during school-age health screening.

Table 2: Anthropometric Profile of Participants

Variable	Mean \pm SD
Age (years)	9.6 \pm 4.8
Height (cm)	128.4 \pm 28.7
Weight (kg)	29.3 \pm 12.6

The graphical presentation of the anthropometric profile revealed great variability in growth parameters, as there is a heterogeneous population of pediatric people. There was growth of height and weight according to normal growth patterns as expected with age. This variance was a solid foundation upon which to estimate the correlation between body size and renal sizes.

Table 3: Mean Renal Dimensions

Renal Parameter	Right Kidney	Left Kidney
Length (mm)	78.5 \pm 12.4	80.2 \pm 13.1
Width (mm)	34.6 \pm 6.8	36.1 \pm 7.2
Volume (cm ³)	65.4 \pm 18.7	69.2 \pm 19.5

The measurement of the kidneys in the renal system revealed a minor difference in the size of the left kidney than the right, in all of the parameters. This asymmetry is in keeping with the anatomical variations which tend to be reported in the literature of pediatric renal imaging. In general, the renal size was rising with the age and indicators of body growth.

Table 4: Correlation Between Renal Dimensions and Anthropometric Variables

Variable	Renal Length	Renal Width	Renal Volume
Age	0.62	0.58	0.66
Height	0.78	0.74	0.81
Weight	0.69	0.65	0.73

The correlation was very strong between renal dimensions and all anthropometric variables. Height showed the best correlate with renal length, width and volume since it showed that how the skeleton grows is the best predictor of the size of the kidney. The weight also indicated a significant correlation, especially with renal volume, indicating that body mass overall plays an important role in kidneys development.

Table 5: Multiple Linear Regression Model for Renal Length

Predictor	β Coefficient	Standard Error	p-value
Age	0.21	0.08	0.012
Height	0.54	0.06	<0.001
Weight	0.31	0.07	0.004

The regression model showed that the three variables used in the predictability of the renal length were age, height and weight and were all statistically important to predict the renal length. The best independent predictors came out to be height and then weight. The stronger, yet not significantly strong

impact was on age. The model attributed a significant percentage of variation of length of renal to it, demonstrating that it has good predictive capability.

Table 6: Multiple Linear Regression Model for Renal Volume

Predictor	β Coefficient	Standard Error	p-value
Age	0.18	0.09	0.041
Height	0.60	0.05	<0.001
Weight	0.42	0.06	<0.001

Anthropometric variables were found to have even stronger relationships with renal volume, than with renal length. Height was the most significant predictor with weight also having a strong impact within the body mass and the volume in the organs. The effect of age was slightly lesser yet significant.

Table 7: Gender Differences in Renal Dimensions

Parameter	Male	Female
Renal Length (mm)	81.2 \pm 12.6	77.4 \pm 12.1
Renal Volume (cm ³)	70.8 \pm 18.9	64.5 \pm 18.3

The males were marginally bigger in size renal in length and volume than the females. This distinction probably has to do with variations of somatic pathways of growth and not pathological diversity. The differences however were not significant to raise any clinical concern when body size was taken into consideration.

The correlation showed that there was a strong and consistent association between the renal dimensions and the anthropometric variables. The most reliable predictor concluded to be height, closely after weight and age was the renal size. Renal length and renal volume were proportional to body growth as time went on, validating that development of kidney is tightly coupled with growth in the whole body.

Results revealed by the regression models were that the prediction of renal size is more accurate with several anthropometric variables as opposed to the models fitted only using single variables (age-only). This helps in the formulation of normative renal dimension models which can be used in clinical practice among the children population.

DISCUSSION

The current experiment was meant to come up with age-, height-, and weight-adjusted renal dimension models using CT images in a group of children. The results indicated that there was a close and stable correlation between the renal dimensions and anthropometric data, especially the height and weight. These findings support the idea that kidney growth is tightly-coupled with general somatic development and not age, which has been supported by other recent pediatric nephrology studies that underline the importance of body-size dependency in the scaling of kidneys (Lee & Siegel, 2018; Gomes and Sampaio, 2017).

Height was found to be the most important predictor of the renal length and the renal volume then weight. This finding is consistent with past research that has found height to be the most powerful predictor of renal dimensions in children since it is closely related to skeletal and organ development patterns (Kliegman, 2020; Friedman and Jones, 2022). Weight also showed a good correlation especially with the renal volume, which implies that the metabolic need and body structure could also affect the growth of the kidneys. Nevertheless, age demonstrated a rather relatively lower predictive value which justifies the argument of insufficiency of age-based reference standards to effectively conduct renal evaluation.

The observed mild gender-based disparity between the renal size of males and females is in agreement with previous research that shows that there is slight gender-based difference in the renal mass in childhood and adolescence (Greenfield, 2019). These differences however were not statistically significant when other anthropometric factors were taken into consideration, implying that the major factor that influences renal growth is body size as opposed to gender.

Another finding in this study is that CT imaging is also found to outperform other diagnostic techniques in the morphometric evaluation of the kidney. CT is associated with high reproducibility of measurements of renal length, width, and volume, and is recommended as a valid imaging modality in research and complicated cases in diagnosis (Callahan, 2019). Ultrasound is the most common technique to use because it is safe and accessible, but the method is not accurate and relies on the operator, and such issues can underestimate the occurrence of the renal abnormalities, including complex and border patients (Riccabona, 2021).

Regression equations formulated throughout the study showed a high predictive ability; this implies that the use of a combination of anthropometric variables can greatly enhance renal size estimations. The result confirms earlier research that recommends the use of multivariable predictive models over single variable (age) charts (Subramanian and Bhat, 2021). These models have been especially relevant especially with pediatric population where growth patterns differ greatly owing to nutritional, genetic and environmental factors.

Altogether, the study underlines the issue of personalized renal evaluation of body-size-adjusted parameters. Use of age alone in clinical practice can result in poor interpretation of the enlargement or shrinkage of the kidneys and this will probably be detrimental to diagnosis or might result in unnecessary looking into the matter. CT-based morphometric modeling and integration provides a more accurate and efficient method of the pediatric kidney analysis.

CONCLUSION

This paper concludes that anthropometric variables such as height and weight play a major role with regard to renal dimensions among children. Age, on its own is not a good predictor of kidney size and one should not use age based reference standards as a predictor of size with the possibility of poor clinical interpretation with absence of age. The CT imaging was a very promising modality in the process of determining the renal size and making predictive models. The research was able to link the successful hypothesis that age-, height-, and weight-adjusted model would provide a better paradigm upon which pediatric renal dimensions can be assessed as opposed to the traditional paradigms.

RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the findings, it is suggested that pediatric renal evaluation must take on a multidimensional approach as opposed to being based only upon basing charts based on age. Clinical assessment should include height and weight in regular clinical assessment, and this would enhance the interpretation of the renal size. Cases involving complexities or inconclusive cases should be discussed as an additional diagnostic method to offer accurate anatomy evaluation whereas ensuring that exposure to radiation is warranted and reduced.

The healthcare system (and especially low-resource settings) must strive to create the standardized, population-specific renal dimension charts, including anthropometric variability. This would also lead to improved early diagnosis of kidney disorders as well as lessening cases of errors in diagnosis. Moreover, clinicians need to be trained in order to interpret renal measurements based on body size and not only on age which can enhance patient outcomes and diagnostic accuracy.

Future studies need to concentrate on larger multicenter studies, as well as the creation of automated predictive modeling through artificial intelligence, to further hone renal dimension modeling in children.

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