



UNC
KIDNEY CENTER

Podcast Transcript:

Dr. Ron Falk

Fibrillary GN

“Fibrillary GN: What is it?”

Patient: What is Fibrillary GN?

Dr Falk: It's a word that's even hard to pronounce-- Fibrillary Glomerulonephritis. This is a disease that affects the filters of the kidney, or the glomeruli. You have about a million and a half of these filters. They are there to get rid of toxins and water, and keep in your bloodstream blood and protein.

In some patients, and in your disease in particular, normal protein is deposited along that filtration wall, the glomerular capillary wall. The proteins that are deposited there are normal proteins but are clogging the filter by virtue of how they have become deposited in the capillary wall.

This is really a hard concept to try to grapple with, these are not foreign proteins-they are your own proteins. The obvious question is, Why did they deposit in the way that they have deposited, and what caused them to deposit that way in the first place? I'll tell you-none of us really have any good answer to that question.

The “fibrillary” name comes from the way these proteins are deposited, seen by electron microscopy in a pattern of what really do look like little tiny fibrils. So the name is a pathological description, by electron microscopy, of normal proteins that have deposited abnormally in your glomerular filters and are resulting in the protein that you have in your urine.