CAROLINA NEPHROLOGY, PA
Excellence in Kidney Care

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# Kidney Transplants in the Upstate

**Transplants are a common treatment** for kidney failure that many patients feel affords them greater independence and quality of life than other treatment options. It may be a good idea to consult family members and medical professionals when deciding whether a transplant may be the right choice for you. Also, it is essential to use all the resources available to stay informed throughout the transplant process. Below, you will find some preliminary information that we have identified regarding kidney transplants, specifically here in the Upstate.

## Benefits of Kidney Transplants

For those with kidney disease, a transplant replaces failing kidneys with a healthy one. This tends to result in greater energy levels and overall health, as well as a longer life expectancy than those who remain on dialysis. For those who have spent minimal time on dialysis, a "preemptive" or "early" transplant has many long-term health benefits and can prevent the negative effects of prolonged dialysis on finances, work, and family life. As long as the patient is healthy enough to undergo a significant operation, anyone is eligible for a kidney transplant. A preliminary medical and psychosocial evaluation eliminates concerns about any potential obstacles to being a good transplant candidate.

## Kidney Transplant Process

The first step towards transplantation is a thorough evaluation through a transplant center, which you can usually be referred to by your physician. If eligible for a kidney transplant, you must then find a suitable kidney. Your priority on a transplant waitlist is usually based on time with kidney failure and remaining kidney function, as well as logistical factors like blood-type and antibody-matching. A living donor, like a friend or loved one, can also donate one of their kidneys to you. The transplant operation takes about 4 hours, and your own kidneys are generally not removed unless absolutely necessary – the new one is simply added into your lower abdomen, where it is connected to blood vessels and the bladder, and is also more easily accessible should any complications arise. Depending on whether the kidney was from a living or deceased donor, it may work instantly or may take a few weeks and require dialysis to begin working. You will participate in regular check-ups, especially during the first year, and will also need to take medicine to prevent infection and rejection. Although it varies, many patients are fully recovered in as little as two months.

## Post-Transplant Complications

As with most other medical procedures, in addition to the many upsides there are also a few downsides to kidney transplants that we wanted to address clearly. This procedure has many associated risks, one major one being that you may need more than one transplant during your lifetime. It is also possible that your body rejects the organ, so anti-rejection medication must be taken indefinitely and may carry some negative side effects. Transplant patients are also at higher risk for certain infections and cancers. However, while it is important to be educated on these potential issues, kidney transplants are usually very successful in improving overall health and quality of life, and tend to last for many years. For most people, a transplant is a good and viable option.

## Prisma Health Transplantation Program for Upstate Patients

To respond to a rising demand for organ donations in the Upstate community, Prisma Health is currently working to develop a solid organ transplantation program, and plans to begin with kidney transplants in late 2021. The Scientific Registry of Transplant Recipients shows that 33% of all organs donated by South Carolinians are received by patients in other states, and almost half of the South Carolina residents who received a transplant in 2019 reside in an area serviced by Prisma Health.

Prisma Health's preexisting infrastructure as a comprehensive healthcare delivery system makes its goal of establishing this accredited solid organ transplantation program a feasible one. In 2019, over 30% of South Carolina kidney patients went out of state for their care. This new program will ease the burden of kidney disease on Upstate patients and families by making initial screenings, transplants, and follow-up care easily accessible close to home, and saving more South Carolina lives in the process.

***Article References:***


- National Kidney Foundation: Transplantation Information
- Prisma Health Transplantation Program


# STAFF SPOTLIGHT

## *Shon Walker*

**This newsletter's staff spotlight is Shon Walker!** Shon is twenty-seven years old and attended ECPI University where she received her degree for Health Science in Medical Assisting. She has been at Carolina Nephrology for about a month in a half. As a newer employee, she has been a huge asset to the Carolina Nephrology team and is always eager to help her co-workers with tasks at any time. Shon's favorite thing about her position is that it gives her the opportunity to meet patients from all walks of life. In Shon's free time, you can find her spending time with her boys, Legend (4) and Adonis (2). She also loves going to the park and just enjoying the outdoors when the weather is nice.

**Thanks for all you do, Shon!**

# Lemon Chickpea Pasta WITH ARUGULA + PARMESAN

## Ingredients:

- 1/2 pounds chickpea spaghetti pasta
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 clove garlic crushed
- 1 lemon zested and juiced
- 1/2 cup finely grated Parmesan
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 cups fresh arugula

## Directions:

1. Cook the chickpea pasta in a large pot of boiling water. Drain and place the warm pasta in a bowl.

2. Heat a pan over medium heat. Add the olive oil and the garlic clove. Sauté for 2 minutes and add the lemon juice and zest. Sauté for 2 more minutes. Remove from the heat and pour over the pasta in a large bowl.

3. Add the grated Parmesan, pepper and arugula. Mix and serve.

## Nutrition Profile:

**Recipe Yields 4 Servings**

**Serving Size: 1 Serving**

| | |
|---|---|
| Calories (kcal) | 367 |
| Protein (g) | 14 |
| Carbohydrates (g) | 38 |
| Total Sugars (g) | 1 |
| Fat (g) | 19 |
| Fiber (g) | 5 |
| Saturated Fat (g) | 3 |
| Cholesterol (mg) | 9 |
| Calcium (mg) | 149 |
| Magnesium (mg) | 9 |
| Phosphorus (mg) | 70 |
| Potassium (mg) | 447 |
| Sodium (mg) | 214 |

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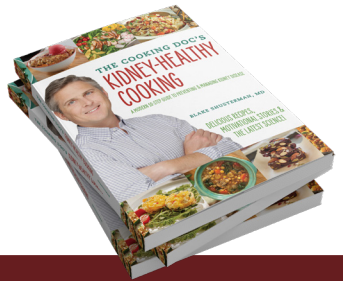


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