CAROLINA NEPHROLOGY, PA
Excellence in Kidney Care

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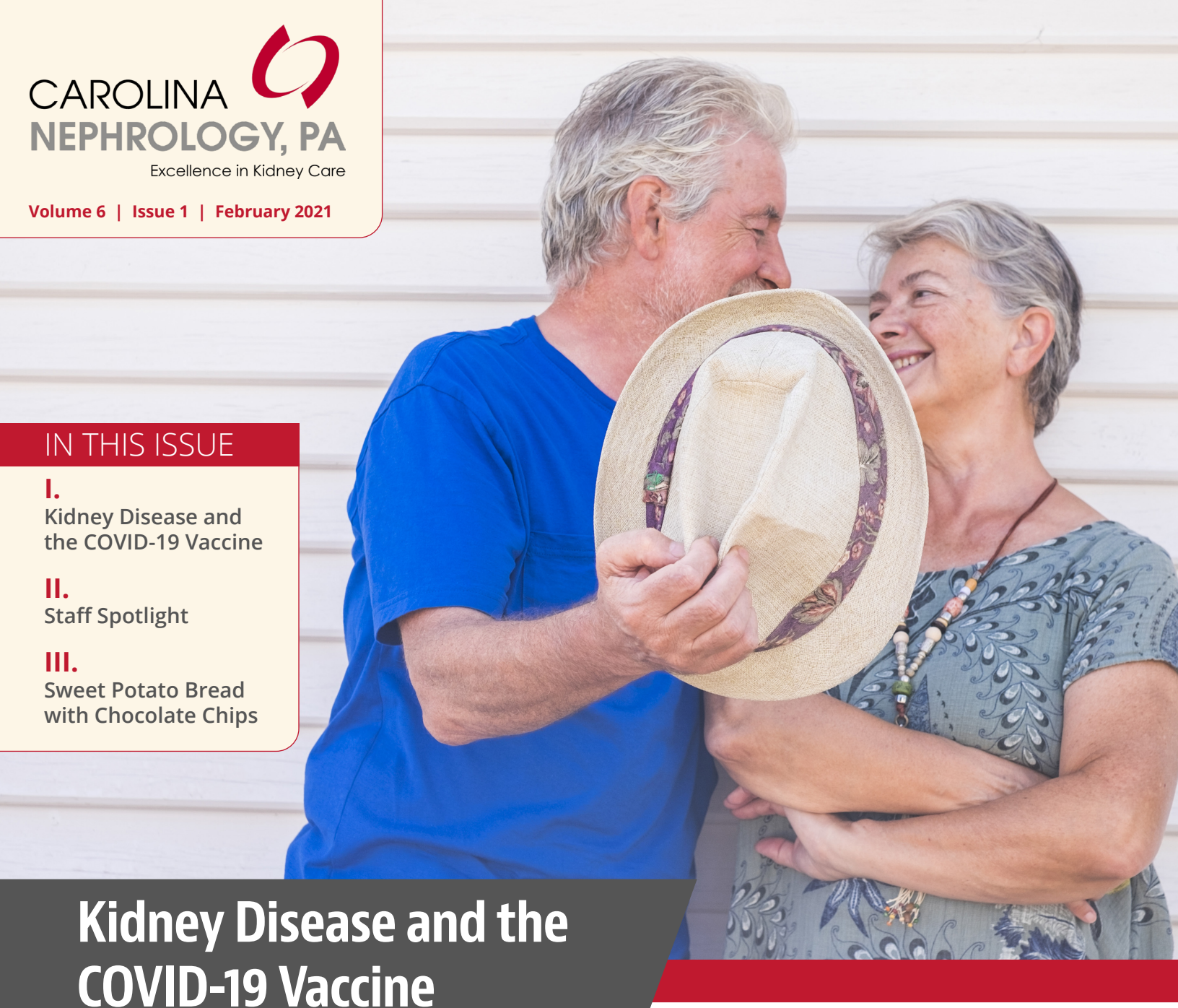

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Kidney Disease and the COVID-19 Vaccine

As world health officials continue to make significant strides towards immunizing the population against the novel coronavirus, it has become more important than ever to seek accurate information about the benefits and risks of their solutions. A coronavirus vaccine, though a very important healthcare development, is not necessarily a panacea – especially for those Americans with Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD). Below are answers to a few of the most pressing questions about the COVID-19 vaccine and its implications for kidney patients.

Are Kidney Patients Prioritized for Vaccine Distribution? Ethical vaccine distribution must include prioritized access for those who are at the highest risk of mortality or severe morbidity caused by the novel coronavirus. The latest recommendation of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), updated December 2020, places "people aged 16–64 years with high-risk medical conditions" in Phase 1c of vaccine distribution. This category includes kidney patients and represents the highest priority after the initial vaccination of health care personnel and long-term care facility residents during Phases 1a and 1b.

Although supplies of the COVID-19 vaccine are currently limited and access is therefore restricted, production is rapidly increasing. The national supply is projected to increase dramatically in the weeks and

months ahead, and once large quantities of vaccines become available, all Americans should have an opportunity to be vaccinated against the coronavirus. With this said, it is important to note that every state is handling vaccine distribution differently, so we recommend following SCDHEC announcements closely to determine your eligibility.

Where can CKD Patients Safely Receive a Vaccination?

The National Kidney Foundation is working to provide the proper support for dialysis facilities (and other locations where kidney patients safely receive regular care and treatment) to become COVID-19 vaccination centers. In order for this to succeed, these facilities must be equipped with specific resources to safely store and efficiently administer vaccines to kidney patients. For those at a lower risk (i.e., immunosuppressed CKD patients, individuals living in the same house as a kidney patient), getting vaccinated at your usual health provider is a viable option.

Is the COVID-19 Vaccine Safe for Kidney Patients?

The world is watching expectantly as progress on the COVID-19 vaccine develops, and so scrutiny of safety and efficacy tests is elevated. It is important to note that there have not been significant vaccine trials involving kidney transplant recipients or individuals with CKD. However, based on data from intense safety monitoring systems – both existing and new – and extensive clinical trials, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) has found that "the known and potential benefits of this vaccine outweigh the known and potential harms of becoming infected with the coronavirus disease 2019." The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has subsequently confirmed these findings, and approved two COVID-19 vaccines, Pfizer and Moderrna, to be granted Emergency Use Authorizations (EUA). This indicates world health officials' acceptance of these vaccines as safe for administration to the general public, including kidney patients.

Should I Get the Vaccine?

The currently approved COVID-19 vaccines require two administered shots for the vaccination to be effective. You may experience soreness or mild flu-like symptoms for a few days after receiving a COVID-19 shot; however, the vaccine will NOT make you sick with COVID-19 as it does not contain the live virus. Mild side effects are a normal sign of your body working to build immunity.

Getting vaccinated is simply one component of the group effort towards halting this ongoing pandemic. To continue protecting yourself and your community from COVID-19, it is important to continue to adhere to CDC recommendations of wearing a face mask and social distancing until national vaccination levels reach the point of herd immunity. The sooner you can get vaccinated against the coronavirus, the better!

For more information on the vaccine, please visit our website to access direct links from the CDC and NKF geared specifically towards Nephrology patients.

Article References:

- COVID-19 Statement from National Kidney Foundation
- COVID-19 Vaccine Statement from CDC
- COVID-19 Vaccine 8 Things to Know from CDC

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Shayla Kohara

Shayla Kohara recently joined Carolina Nephrology in January 2021. She is a Boiling Springs High School alumni, and is enjoying her new position as the Front Desk Coordinator for our Spartanburg office location.

Being new to the field, she is always happy to help and eager to apply herself and learn new things.

Outside of work, Shayla loves to spend time with her three year old son, Khalil. Some of their hobbies include watching cartoons on Saturday mornings and playing at the park.

Thanks for all you do, Shayla!

SWEET POTATO BREAD WITH Chocolate Chips

Ingredients:

- 2 medium sized sweet potatoes
- 1 tablespoon vanilla
- 1 tablespoon flax seeds
- 3 tablespoons water
- 1 cup oat milk
- 1/2 cup oil canola or coconut depending on your flavor profile
- 1 banana mashed
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 cups all-purpose flour or spelt flour for a whole grain version
- 1 teaspoon Baking soda
- 1 teaspoon Baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup dark chocolate chips

Directions:

1. Prepare sweet potatoes. Poke holes in sweet potatoes with a fork. Line the bottom of an oven with aluminum foil, being careful not to cover any vents. Place the sweet potatoes directly on the oven rack and set the temperature to 425°F, without preheating. Cook for 45 minutes and then turn the oven off, leaving the sweet potatoes in the hot oven for 30 minutes. Set aside and let cool. Remove the potato flesh from the skin and puree in a blender.
2. Prepare the flax egg. Whisk together the 3 tablespoons of water with 1 tablespoon of flax seeds. Set aside and let sit for 15 minutes.
3. Preheat oven to 350°F and grease a 5x9 bread loaf pan.
4. In a medium bowl, mix together the oat milk, flax egg, oil, mashed banana, sweet potato puree, vanilla, and cider vinegar.
5. In a separate large bowl, mix the dry ingredients including the flour, sugar, baking soda, baking powder and salt.
6. Make a well in the dry ingredients and add the wet ingredients to the mixture, stirring to combine. Fold in the chocolate chips.
7. Add batter to the pan and bake for 45 minutes or until done.

Nutrition Profile:

Recipe Yields 12 Slices

Serving Size: 1 Slice

Calories (kcal)	231
Protein (g)	4
Carbohydrates (g)	36
Total Sugars (g)	15
Fat (g)	8
Saturated Fat (g)	2
Cholesterol (mg)	2
Calcium (mg)	105
Phosphorus (mg)	77
Potassium (mg)	214
Sodium (mg)	223

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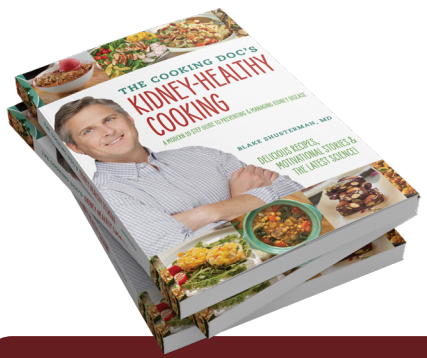

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