The Impact of COVID-19 on Grocery Shopping Habits and Social Distancing Attitudes in an Inner-city CKD Patient Population

Introduction
We surveyed a population of intercity CKD pts about their attitudes towards COVID-19 and changes in grocery shopping habits.

Methods
A survey was conducted over the phone in a random convenience sample with pts from transplant (30), CKD (14) and family medicine clinics (24). Pts were surveyed on attitudes towards COVID-19 and grocery shopping habits. Pts were grouped as High Frequency (HF; once a week or less) and Low Frequency (LF; once every two weeks or greater) shoppers. There were no differences between Transplant and CKD pts so they were analyzed together.

Results
Mean age was 59.0±11.2 years. There were 21 male and 23 female respondents, with 6 hispanic, 30 black, 3 white, 4 mixed or other race respondents. There was a significant difference in mean age between CKD pts and FM pts (65.3±8.5; p=0.02), but no difference in gender or race.

There was no significant difference between the frequency at which CKD pts shopped at grocery stores compared to FM pts prior to COVID-19. After, CKD pts shopped significantly less than FM pts (p=0.01). CKD pts were stratified into HF (14) and LF (18). HF shoppers reported eating more frozen food (p=0.01), more fast food (p=0.02), and less fresh food (p=0.05). Compared to HF, LF shoppers felt they knew how to protect themselves from COVID-19 better (p=0.03) and were more afraid of going to public places (p=0.02). They were also overall more afraid of the coronavirus (p=0.07) and getting it from a friend (p=0.08).

Conclusion
In our population: 1) CKD and FM pts had similar grocery store habits prior to COVID-19. 2) After COVID-19, CKD pts shopped significantly less than FM pts. 3) A subset of pts are shopping less, probably due to fear of COVID19. 3) HF shoppers bought less fresh food, instead buying more fast food and frozen food compared to LF shoppers. 4) LF shoppers were more wary of COVID-19. Healthcare workers should ask pts about their beliefs and educate them on shopping behaviors that minimize risk.