



## What You Need to Know

### Frequently Asked Questions Living Donor Kidney Transplant

**Q** What are the qualifications and potential barriers/restrictions for being a living donor?

**A** Any healthy individual who can give informed consent can be a kidney donor. Some barriers for potential donors are:

- Being under the age of 18
- Uncontrollable hypertension
- Uncontrollable mental illness/psychiatric issues
- Uncontrollable diabetes
- Morbid obesity
- Cancer
- Some infections

**Q** Are there any complications for someone who donates their kidney?

**A** When an individual donates a kidney, their other kidney will enlarge or get bigger, taking on the duties of both kidneys. The donor usually does not need any medications or special diets after transplant. As with any surgery there is a chance of complications, but individuals who donate a kidney have the same life expectancy, overall health and kidney function as most other healthy individuals. Women can still conceive and have a normal pregnancy and delivery.

**Q** Does the donor accumulate any cost with the evaluation, surgery, hospital stay, or any follow up appointments?

**A** The kidney recipient's insurance usually covers these costs. Please make sure to speak with the transplant center and the insurance provider prior to starting the process.

**Q How long is the surgery and what happens during surgery?**

**A** The surgery usually takes about 2-3 hours and is done under general anesthesia. A small incision is made through the skin, a scope is then inserted into the incision and a wand like instrument is used to remove the kidney.

**Q How long is the recovery period for the donor?**

**A** Recovery in the hospital is usually 1-3 days, donors can usually return to work 2-3 weeks after surgery.

**Q Is living donation more beneficial for the recipient than a cadaver donation?**

**A** Yes, living donation is more beneficial to the recipient. The benefits of living kidney donation to the recipient include:

- Better long-term results
- Shorter transplant waitlist times
- Lower risk of complications or rejection
- Better early function of the transplanted kidney

**Q How can I become a donor?**

**A** The first step is to contact a transplant center. If you know the individual you are wanting to donate to, you want to make sure that you are contacting the transplant center they are affiliated with. The next step will be to have your initial screening completed. The donor is then assigned to a donor advocate who will assist you through the donation process.

For more information about kidney transplant or living donation, please visit these websites:

- [National Kidney Foundation](http://www.kidney.org) (www.kidney.org)
- [National Kidney Registry](http://www.kidneyregistry.org) (www.kidneyregistry.org)
- [American Kidney Fund](http://www.kidneyfund.org) (www.kidneyfund.org)
- [Donate Life](http://www.donatelife.net) (www.donatelife.net)
- [Transplant Living](http://transplantliving.org) (transplantliving.org)

For more information or to file a grievance, please contact:

ESRD Network 10 (IL)  
911 E. 86th St., Suite 30 | Indianapolis, IN 46240  
Toll-Free Patient Line (800) 456-6919  
[ESRDNetwork10@qsource.org](mailto:ESRDNetwork10@qsource.org)

ESRD Network 12 (IA, KS, MO, NE)  
2300 Main St., Suite 900 | Kansas City, MO 64108  
Toll-Free Patient Line (800) 444-9965  
[ESRDNetwork12@qsource.org](mailto:ESRDNetwork12@qsource.org)

