



# LIVING KIDNEY DONATION

## What is Living Kidney Donation?

Living kidney donation happens when a living person gives one of their kidneys to someone else who has kidneys that are not working. This is possible because we can live a healthy life with one functioning kidney.

## Why is it needed?

- Nationally, nearly 90,000 people are waiting for a kidney transplant.
- It can take years to get a kidney from a deceased donor.
- Thousands of people die each year while waiting for a kidney.
- Dialysis can help, but receiving a transplant can provide a higher quality of life.

## How do you find a living donor?

Living donors can be relatives, friends, or even strangers. By sharing your story with as many people as possible, you are more likely to find a donor.

## Benefits of Living Kidney Donation

- Once a donor has been found, transplant may happen in 1 year or less.
- Patients can be transplanted while in better health and better able to tolerate surgery.
- Years of dialysis can be avoided.
- Surgery can be scheduled which makes recovery easier.
- Living donor kidneys are often better quality and last up to two times longer than deceased donor kidneys.

## Become a Living Kidney Donor

**Directed Donors** specify who they want to receive their kidney. They can be related or unrelated to their recipient.

**Non-Directed Donors** do not specify nor know their recipient.

**Paired Donation** occurs when a donor and recipient do not match blood or tissue types, so the transplant center can coordinate a "swap" with another donor/recipient pair with whom they are compatible.

**Basic Donor Requirements** (varies by hospital)

- Over 18 in good physical and mental health.
- No history of diabetes, hypertension, cancer, kidney or heart disease.

## The Donation Process

1. Contact your local transplant center.
2. Complete a medical, psychological, and financial evaluation.
3. Check for blood and tissue type compatibility with your recipient (or discuss paired donation).
4. Donation surgery happens either via laparoscopy or an open nephrectomy.
5. Recovery! In most cases, kidney function returns to 70% within 10 to 11 days, and long-term closer to 70%-80%. Most regular activities can resume once fully recovered.



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