

Kidney Transplant Education Resources:

United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS)

www.unos.org

American Organ Transplant Association (AOTA)

www.aotaonline.org

Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA)

www.cota.org

National Kidney Foundation (NKF)

www.kidney.org

American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP)

www.aakp.org

Transplant Experience

www.TransplantExperience.com

International Transplant Nurses Society

www.itns.org

Kidney Transplant Financial Assistance Programs:

American Kidney Fund (AKF)

www.kidneyfund.org

National Living Donor Assistance Center (NLDAC)

www.livingdonorassistance.org

National Transplant Assistance Fund

www.transplantfund.org

United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS)

www.unos.org

Directory of Prescription Drug Patient Assistant Programs

www.phrma.org



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KIDNEY TRANSPLANT



Promoting and facilitating high quality care standards for dialysis and kidney transplant patients in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska.

PATIENT EDUCATION SERIES

What Is a Kidney Transplant?

A kidney transplant is a procedure in which a person whose own kidneys have failed are replaced with a healthy kidney from another person. The newly placed functioning kidney takes over the work of cleaning blood in your body system.

Types of Kidney Transplant

You may receive a kidney from a member of your family. This kind of donor is called a living-related donor. You may receive a kidney from a person who is deceased. This type of donor is called a deceased donor. Sometimes a spouse, friend or even a stranger may donate a kidney. This kind of donor is called a living-unrelated donor.

INSIDE!

- ★ Transplant Evaluation
- ★ Cost of Treatment
- ★ Your Healthcare Team

CONSIDERING A KIDNEY TRANSPLANT?

How & Where Do I Start?

Ultimately, you have the right to be evaluated by a transplant program. You also have the right to be referred to the transplant program of your choice.

To start, let your nephrologist know that you are interested in a kidney transplant. Your nephrologist will discuss the option and any medical issues and then refer you to a transplant program. If any concerns about making the referral arise, make sure you get specific reasons. Not everyone is a transplant candidate.

Who will be my healthcare team?

If you choose to have a kidney transplant, you will meet with members of the Transplant Team for an evaluation. These members include: Transplant Surgeon, Nephrologist, Transplant Coordinators, Staff Nurse, Dietitian, Physical Therapist, Social Worker, Psychologist and Financial Coordinator. During the evaluation, the doctor reviews your medical history and orders a series of tests. These tests include your blood and tissue type. The results of these tests help your doctor decide if you are a candidate for successful kidney transplantation. Additional tests or clinic visits may be needed for your particular medical condition.

How Long Do I have to Wait?

The time it takes to get a kidney varies. There are not enough deceased donors for every person who needs a transplant. You must be placed on a waiting list to receive a deceased donor kidney. However, if a relative or living un-related gives you a kidney, the transplant operation can be done sooner.

Are All Programs the Same?

Each transplant program has its own evaluation guidelines. Therefore, if one transplant program does not accept you for a kidney transplant and you disagree with the decision, you may want to consider applying to another transplant program.

Considering the cost of Treatment

Discuss the cost of treatment during your evaluation. Medicare and most insurance companies usually cover the cost of the evaluation, kidney transplantation, and follow-up care. This coverage includes the hospital charges, physician costs, charges for office visits, and the medications required to prevent your body from rejecting the new kidney. Some patients will pay a portion of the cost for treatment, medications or office visits.

Involve Your Healthcare Team

It's not always easy to decide which type of treatment is best for you. Your decision depends on your medical condition, lifestyle, and personal likes and dislikes. Discuss the pros and cons of each with your health care team. If you start one form of treatment and decide you'd like to try another, talk it over with your doctor. The key is to learn as much as you can about your choices. With that knowledge, you and your doctor will choose a treatment that suits you best.

Questions You May Want To Ask.

- Is transplantation the best treatment choice for me? Why or why not?
- What are my chances of having a successful transplant?
- How do I find out if a family member or friend can donate?
- What are the risks to a family member or friend if he or she donates?
- If a family member or friend doesn't donate, how do I get placed on a waiting list for a kidney? How long will I have to wait?
- What are the symptoms of rejection?
- Who will be on my health care team? How can they help me?
- Who can I talk to about sexuality, finances, or family concerns?