CONSIDERING
Living Kidney Donation?

CHOOSE DONATION

"Being a living kidney donor was the greatest experience of my life. I feel so rewarded by having the opportunity to give my son a new chance at life."

— Marie Palazzo, donated a kidney in November 2023

Becoming a Living Kidney Donor

Before you become a living kidney donor, you will need to go through thorough testing to ensure you are medically able to donate. If you are approved, you can donate to help someone in need.

Donate to someone you know:

If you want to donate your kidney to someone specific, the NKR's Voucher Program is the best way to ensure your intended recipient gets the best-matched kidney. You do not have to be medically compatible with your intended recipient. You donate on your own schedule and the NKR will find a recipient who is the best match for your kidney. Your donation generates a voucher for your intended recipient, and when they are ready for their transplant they can redeem their voucher for a kidney from a well-matched living donor. In addition to the voucher holder in imminent need, you can also name up to five family members as backup voucher holders should your intended recipient end up not using the voucher.

Donate to a stranger:

The best way to donate to a stranger is through the NKR's Family Voucher Program. You donate when you are ready and name up to five healthy family members as voucher holders. If one of them needs a kidney in the future, they can redeem a voucher for a living kidney donor transplant through the NKR. Only one voucher can be redeemed.

We are born with two kidneys but only need one to live. Donating your extra kidney to someone who needs a kidney transplant can help them lead a longer, healthier life. Living kidney donation is very low-risk, and the vast majority of living kidney donors experience no complications or long-term negative effects.

Why Do People Need Kidney Transplants?

A kidney transplant is used to treat kidney failure. People with kidney failure, also called end-stage kidney disease or renal failure, need either dialysis or a kidney transplant to stay alive. Most kidney disease is caused by diabetes or high blood pressure, but can also be caused by glomerulonephritis, polycystic kidney disease, birth defects, lupus and other immune diseases, obstructions like kidney stones or tumors, or repeated urinary infections.

Why Donate Through the NKR?

The NKR offers comprehensive support and protections to make kidney donation easier, safer and more convenient for living donors, including:

Lost wage reimbursement for donation-related time off work

Donor expense reimbursement for donation-related travel, lodging, meals, dependent care, and pet care

Kidney prioritization in the unlikely event you ever need a kidney

Remote donation so you can have tests and surgery close to home

Donor mentors allow you to connect with a living kidney donor

The latest technology so your recipient gets the best possible match

Legal Support to fight rare cases of donation-related termination and discrimination

Complication protection to cover any uncovered complication-related costs

Home blood draws to eliminate trips to the transplant center

Living Kidney Donation By the Numbers

90,000
Number of people in the United States waiting for a kidney from a deceased donor

Living Donation:

120 days
Typical wait time for a kidney patient to find a matched kidney from a living donor through the NKR

20–40 years
Length of time the average kidney from a living donor lasts

Deceased Donation:

2–10 years
Typical wait time for a deceased kidney donor

8–15 years
Length of time the average kidney from a deceased donor lasts

To see if you're qualified to donate, visit:

kidneyregistry.com/consider