

# Preparing for a kidney transplant

A kidney transplant is a surgical procedure that places a healthy kidney from a donor into a person whose kidneys are no longer functioning. Learn more about this treatment option for end-stage kidney disease and how to prepare for the procedure.

## Understanding the procedure

You only need one working kidney to be healthy. This means only one kidney is transplanted during surgery. During the procedure:

- Your two original kidneys usually stay in place and the new donor kidney is placed in another area of your abdomen.
- The ureter (urine tube) from the donor kidney is attached to your bladder. The blood vessels from the donor kidney are attached to your blood vessels.
- Your new kidney takes over filtering your blood and making urine—like your own kidneys did before kidney disease.

## Steps to transplant

### Where to start

Once you and your care team decide that transplant is a good option for you, you will need to choose a transplant center. You will then complete a medical exam and screening tests to determine whether you are healthy enough for surgery. If so, you will be placed on the waiting list for a deceased donor transplant.

### Finding a donor

You can have potential live kidney donors evaluated by the transplant center to see if they are a match and healthy enough to donate a kidney. If not, you will remain on the waiting list for a deceased donor. As others receive transplants, you will move closer to the top of the list. Once you are at or near the top, you may be offered a matching kidney from a deceased donor.

### Staying healthy for transplant

You play an important role in staying healthy for a kidney transplant. Steps you can take to help feel your best include:

- ✓ Eating a healthy diet
- ✓ Exercising regularly
- ✓ Stopping smoking and tobacco products
- ✓ Maintaining a healthy weight and losing weight if necessary
- ✓ Managing other health conditions like high blood pressure and diabetes
- ✓ Taking your medications as prescribed

If your kidney function gets worse while you wait for a transplant, dialysis may be needed.



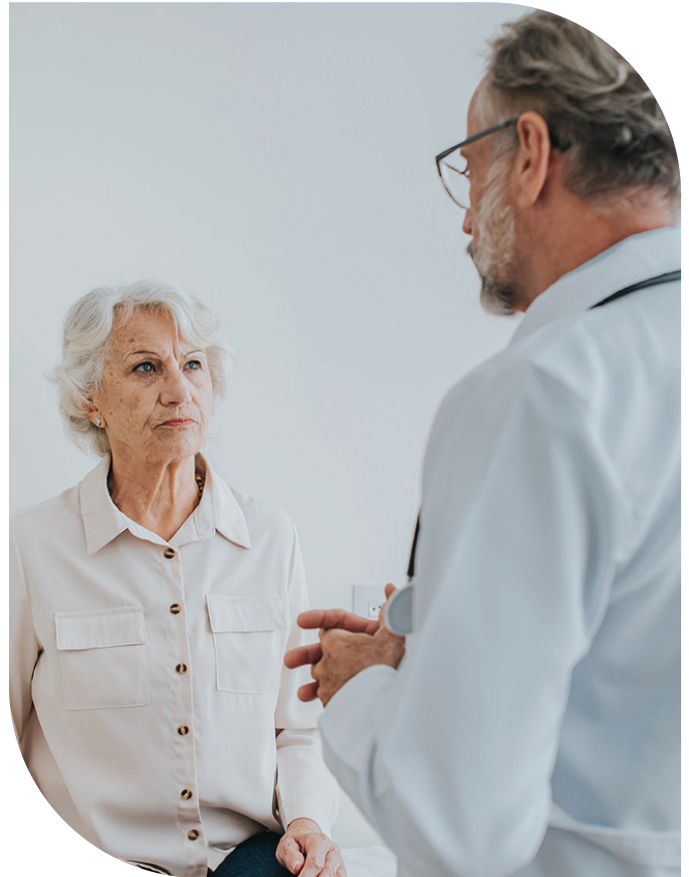
## Ready for transplant

If you've met all the requirements, a donor kidney is available, and you're scheduled for transplant surgery, your doctor will give you details about what to expect and instructions to plan for the procedure. Keep a list of questions to ask so you feel ready for your transplant. You can also stay in close contact with your transplant coordinator to get updates and education about the process.

## Kidney transplant recovery

You will stay in the hospital after your transplant. Your transplant team will monitor your progress and let you know when you can go home. You will take anti-rejection medications to help your body accept your new kidney.

After you leave the hospital, you will have frequent follow-up appointments to check your progress. Over time, if your new kidney is doing well, you will be able to return to your regular kidney doctor and have fewer appointments.



### We are here to help

We are here to support you along the way. Reach out if you have questions about preparing for a kidney transplant.