

Finding a Donor



Getting the Word Out

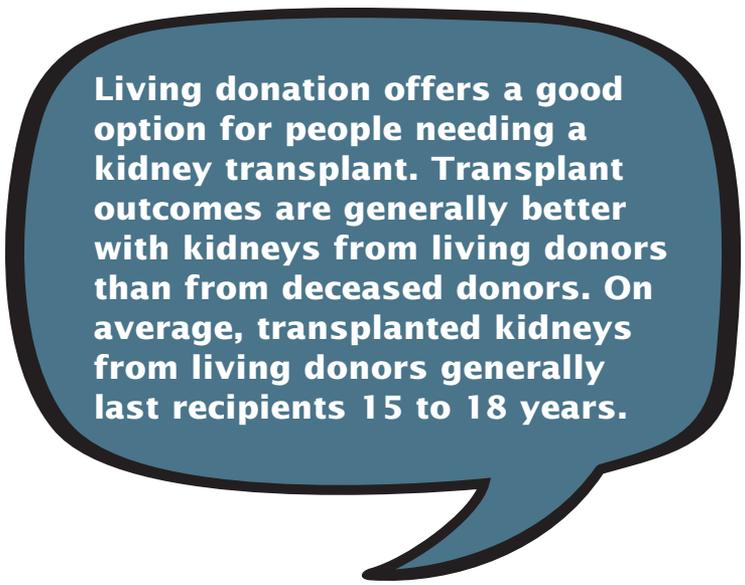
*A step-by-step guide for
reaching out to potential donors*

Living Kidney Donation Program



London Health Sciences Centre

Multi-Organ Transplant Program



Living donation offers a good option for people needing a kidney transplant. Transplant outcomes are generally better with kidneys from living donors than from deceased donors. On average, transplanted kidneys from living donors generally last recipients 15 to 18 years.

Why living donation?

A living donor offers some advantages – you might avoid dialysis altogether and be able to prepare for a planned surgery date. With a living donor, your waiting time will be shorter while waiting for a deceased donor may take many months or even years. Before approaching potential donors, speak with your primary nephrologist to determine if transplantation is a treatment option for you.

Getting Ready

Approaching potential donors can seem difficult. It is common to feel a range of emotions as you consider reaching out to find someone who may be willing to be a living donor.

You may feel:

- **Uneasy** about asking and unsure of how to go about it.
- **Confused** about who can be a potential donor.
- **Disappointed** that no one has come forward or offered to donate.
- **Hesitant** to ask potential donors in case they feel pressured.
- **Fear** for the future health of the person who donates the kidney.
- **Concern** about the impact on the donor and his or her daily life.
- **Anxious** about feeling indebted to the donor and if your relationship might somehow change.



Arlene, kidney donor

Discussing these feelings and concerns with your transplant or renal social worker can help. They have worked with many patients over the years and understand the emotions and the challenges.

Knowing the facts about living kidney donation is a great way to begin and will help you feel more comfortable when approaching people.

Know the facts:

- *Donors can live healthy, normal lives with one kidney.*
- *Donors are screened carefully to see if they are medically suitable to donate a kidney.*
- *The donor assessment process is confidential. Donors can gather information and be assessed before making a commitment to donate.*
- *Donors must start the screening process themselves by contacting the Living Kidney Donation Program at London Health Sciences Centre.*
- *At any step in the process, a potential donor can choose not to proceed with the donation.*
- *If your donor is not a match, you may be able to participate in the Kidney Paired Donation Program through Canadian Blood Services.*
- *The Program for Reimbursing Expenses of Living Donors (PRELOD) can help donors with some of the costs related to assessment and surgery.*

You may also want to read the brochure, The Living Donor Kidney Transplant Process, which provides a step-by-step guide for living donors. You can read it online at www.lhsc.on.ca/livingkidneydonation.

Once your primary nephrologist tells you that transplantation is a treatment option, the next step is getting the word out to potential organ donors.

Who to Approach

Donors can be family, friends, work colleagues and acquaintances. Being genetically related to the donor can be beneficial, but it is not required. Anti-rejection medications have improved so having a non-related donor is now a good option.

How to Get the Word Out

Once you are comfortable talking with people about living donation, you can start to reach out. You can share your story, and ask others to share it with people in their circle. The more people who know of your need, the greater your chance of finding a donor.



Joanne (left), friend and kidney donor to Joanna

Here are some ideas other recipients have used:

- Ask a family member or friend to be your spokesperson/advocate. For example, asking a spouse to provide information to others has led to successful outcomes in the past.
- Some recipients have used social media, such as Facebook or blogs, to inform their social circle of their medical situation. If you choose this option, it is highly recommended that you contact the Program first to discuss. Be mindful that the information shared cannot be taken back.
- Encourage your personal support people to attend your medical appointments with you so they can learn about your kidney disease and the option of living donation.
- Link with your local Kidney Foundation branch. They can put you in touch with other kidney patients who know what you are going through, and can provide education and support.

Remember

In Canada it is illegal to buy or sell organs. Donors must come forward freely and without pressure.

Success – A Donor Comes Forward

If you have a potential donor, or know someone who wants more information before making a decision, tell them to contact the Living Kidney Donation Program at London Health Sciences Centre. The living donation team will provide information and guide him or her through the process.

Need more information?

Living Donation Program

Room B3-240A
University Hospital, LHSC
339 Windermere Road
London, ON N6A 5A5

Phone: 519.685.8500 ext. 33552

Fax: 519.663.3141

Web: www.lhsc.on.ca/livingkidneydonation

Email: livingkidneydonation@lhsc.on.ca

Additional Resources

Living Kidney Donation at LHSC (video)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5XI7uYdwyQE>

Multi-Organ Transplant Program, LHSC
www.lhsc.on.ca/transplant

Trillium Gift of Life Network
www.giftoflife.on.ca

PRELOD Program
www.giftoflife.on.ca/resources/pdf/PRELOD_FAQ.pdf

Kidney Connect (Kidney Foundation of Canada)
www.kidneyconnect.ca

Kidney Foundation of Canada, Ontario branch
www.kidney.on.ca

Kidney Foundation of Canada, National branch
www.kidney.ca

Kidney Paired Donation Program (Canadian Blood Services)
<https://blood.ca/en/organs-tissues/becoming-live-kidney-donor>



You may also find this brochure useful:

***The Living Donor
Kidney Transplant Process
A step-by-step guide for
living kidney donors***



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London Health Sciences Centre
Multi-Organ Transplant Program

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