

Do You Want to Be a Living Kidney Donor?

With nearly 60,000 people currently waiting for a kidney transplant, there is a desperate need for organ donors. Living organ donations have saved countless lives that would have been lost while the patient waited for a cadaveric kidney. Living donors have ranged from parents to siblings and even distant acquaintances. Now, an increasing number of people are expressing interest in anonymously donating a kidney to anyone who needs it.

But being a living donor isn't something to be considered lightly. Here are some things to think about:

- The donor screening process is rigorous. Potential donors can expect multiple blood tests, a complete physical exam and supply an extensive medical history. They also will face a psychological review and answer some important, but very personal questions.
- Potential donors must be in good physical condition. Some diseases and medical conditions, such as diabetes, will prohibit a person from being a donor.
- Because of the extensive testing required, up to six months can pass before the transplant actually occurs.
- Donating a kidney is relatively safe, but it is still considered major surgery. There is some pain and discomfort involved, so the donor should plan on taking it easy for several weeks while they recover.
- Most people can live a perfectly normal life with one kidney. But if something should happen to the remaining kidney, the donor would be given priority on the transplant list.

If you or someone who know is interested in being a living kidney donor, please call The Nebraska Medical Center at (800) 401-4444 or (402) 552-2440, and ask for an organ donation coordinator.

