

# Let's talk about...

## Leaving hospital and your post donation aftercare

During your time in hospital after donating a kidney, you will meet a range of healthcare professionals who will advise you on your short and long term follow up. Please ensure you have discussed the points covered in this factsheet with your team before you leave hospital. It is very important that you make a safe and full recovery from your surgery.

We always recommend having someone stay with you for the first few days you are home - they are your second pair of eyes and ears so please listen to them if they are concerned about you. You will need to know how to contact your team or appropriate emergency services.

**We must be aware if you have:**

- High temperature or fever
- Nausea or vomiting
- New pain in your tummy or lower back
- Ooze or redness around any of your wounds or if they are hot to touch
- Discomfort or burning when passing urine or cloudy or smelly urine

If you have anything else that is concerning you or that you are unsure about, please speak to us.

**Before you leave hospital, make sure you have discussed:**

- Pain management and medication
- Wound management and dressings
- Thrombo-embolism prophylaxis (reducing risk of blood clots)
- Constipation/bloating/diet
- Exercise and rehabilitation
- In-patient medical certificate
- Letter for General Practitioner
- Someone to take you home and stay with you
- Follow up appointment

### Important information

#### Clinic

You will usually be seen for a surgical review within 4 to 8 weeks of your operation. All living kidney donors are offered lifelong follow up. This is an annual appointment, either at the hospital, with your GP or virtual.

Please discuss with your transplant team and/or local unit to find out which follow up arrangements are available for you.

Driving	
You are advised not to drive for a period after donation.	It is also important to check you are insured to drive after an operation. Please discuss with your local team so that they can advise what is best for you.
Exercise	
There is a balance between rest and exercise. It is healthy to go on a walk every day if you feel up to it and you will usually be back to normal activity within 4 to 6 weeks. You should avoid vigorous exercise and heavy lifting for 8 to 12 weeks.	Be guided by your stamina and any symptoms (e.g. wound discomfort) when choosing the type and duration of exercise. Ensure you also have plenty of rest.
Flying	
When you fly, the risk of developing a deep vein thrombosis (a blood clot) is increased. For this reason, you are advised to wait for at least 2 weeks for a short haul flight and longer for a long haul flight.	Before you fly, it must be safe for you to do so. You need to be signed off by your surgeon and ensure that all your follow-up tests are satisfactory. Speak to your unit about extra precautions (e.g. surgical stockings and any medications) you might need to reduce the risk of blood clots.
Sex, Contraception and Pregnancy	
You may resume your usual sexual activity when you feel comfortable to do so and are no longer experiencing any pain. It is not advisable for women to get pregnant from 6 to 12 months after the operation so you must use contraception.	You may have been advised to stop taking the contraceptive pill prior to donation so speak to your GP about when is a suitable time to resume the pill.
Living Donor Pin	
In recognition of your gift of living donation you will receive a specially designed silver pin from NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT), which will be sent to you at home after your donation. It may take a few weeks for your donation to be registered with NHSBT so please allow time for your pin to arrive.	If you do <b>not</b> want to participate in this recognition scheme you can opt out by speaking to your living donor coordinator before you leave hospital so that your wishes are recorded.
Kidney function	
You should be aware that the creatinine level in your blood may be higher and the estimated GFR (eGFR) post-donation will be lower. This is perfectly normal. For more information, please read the fact sheet at this link: <a href="http://www.organdonation.nhs.uk/become-a-living-donor/donating-your-kidney/living-kidney-donation-fact-sheets/">www.organdonation.nhs.uk/become-a-living-donor/donating-your-kidney/living-kidney-donation-fact-sheets/</a>	Most areas in the UK have an alert system, which flags up eGFR of <60mls/min. It is very important for you to be aware that previous kidney donors are NOT included in this group as you do NOT have chronic kidney disease. Your GFR is lower due to having a single kidney and the remaining kidney is perfectly healthy.

## UK Living Donor Registry

To help inform people who are considering becoming a living donor, NHS Blood and Transplant holds a UK-wide registry of all living donors. Follow-up data, including questions about your self-reported outcome (Donor Reported Outcome Measure (DROM)) and experience (Donor Reported Experience Measure (DREM)) as a living donor are collected in this important Registry. All data is anonymised when reported.

This data provides good information about long term donor health, kidney function and donor experience. Your contribution is much appreciated. Speak with your local living donor team if you have any concerns about data collection or how your data is used.

Please contact your local living donor team at any point in the future if you develop a significant health condition.

## Psychological support

Donating a kidney can be an emotional process and you may need some additional support. Some units in the UK have access to psychological support, others via the General Practitioner or local mental health services.

If you feel you require extra support following your donation speak with your local team about services available in your area.

## Thank you

Whether you have donated to a close relative or friend, or anonymously into the kidney sharing scheme, your gift changes lives.

If you have donated as a non-directed altruistic donor or within the UK living kidney sharing scheme you will not know who received your kidney. You may receive a written thank you from your recipient – often this is some time after the transplant. Some people may never write because they find it difficult to know what to say. Your gift of donation is, nonetheless, always appreciated.

## Additional information and support can be accessed through the following links:

NHS Blood and Transplant	<a href="http://www.organdonation.nhs.uk">www.organdonation.nhs.uk</a>
Living Donation Scotland	<a href="http://www.livingdonation.scot">www.livingdonation.scot</a>
Give a Kidney	<a href="http://www.giveakidney.org">www.giveakidney.org</a>
GOLD	<a href="http://www.giftoflivingdonation.co.uk">www.giftoflivingdonation.co.uk</a>
Kidney Care UK	<a href="http://www.kidneycareuk.org">www.kidneycareuk.org</a>
Kidney Research UK	<a href="http://www.kidneyresearchuk.org">www.kidneyresearchuk.org</a>
National Kidney Foundation	<a href="http://www.kidney.org">www.kidney.org</a>

Find out more about living kidney donation, visit [www.organdonation.nhs.uk/become-a-living-donor](http://www.organdonation.nhs.uk/become-a-living-donor) call 0300 123 23 23 or email [enquiries@nhsbt.nhs.uk](mailto:enquiries@nhsbt.nhs.uk)



**Yes I donate**  
ORGAN DONATION