

## Let's talk about...

# The benefits of receiving a kidney from a living donor

**When you are told that you need a kidney transplant, speaking to family and friends about possible living kidney donor transplantation can be difficult. People might think that waiting for a kidney from a deceased donor is the better option, rather than have someone close to you go through an operation. It is important to know the facts – a kidney from a living donor usually offers a better long-term outcome and family and friends may not know this. It is important that they do know so that they can make an informed choice about what they want to do and make the best decision for themselves as well as for you.**

### **Why is a kidney from a living donor better for me?**

We know from experience around the world that the best possible treatment for kidney failure is a kidney transplant, preferably from a living donor. Ideally, everyone who is suitable would get a transplant and avoid dialysis but there are not enough organs for everyone to have the transplant they

need at the right time. Starting the assessment of a living donor early means that the transplant can be carefully timed to avoid dialysis.

There are other advantages too – the living donor undergoes such careful assessment that we know it is as safe as possible for them to donate, and you know exactly what you can expect from the kidney you are going to receive. The operations are planned so there is a very short time the kidney is outside the human body, even when kidneys are being exchanged in the UK Living Kidney Sharing Scheme. This means that a kidney from a living donor usually works immediately.

### **Does a kidney from a living donor always last longer?**

In the UK we know that 98% of kidneys from living donors are working at one year, compared to 94% from deceased donors. And at 5 years there are 92% of living donor kidneys still working, compared to 87% from deceased

donors. If we look at longer term patient survival, 90% of patients in the UK who received a living donor transplant are alive after 10 years, compared to 75% who received a kidney from a deceased donor. For patients who remain on dialysis their survival is estimated at approximately 55% after 10 years.



## **I still worry about asking someone I know to have an operation they don't need to have to benefit me.**

This is entirely to be expected and the transplant teams are very aware of this. The risks to donors are low, but every donor undergoes a rigorous assessment to check that it is safe and sensible to donate and that they are clear about any individual risk to them. It can help to speak to people who have already donated, and those who have received a kidney from a living donor. It is important to remember that people who come forward wanting to donate really want to get the best possible outcome for the recipient, and having all these facts can help you come to the best decision for everyone.

**For further information on living donation visit:  
[www.organdonation.nhs.uk/become-a-living-donor](http://www.organdonation.nhs.uk/become-a-living-donor)**

Statistics about living donor kidney transplantation can be found in the NHSBT Annual and Organ Specific Reports at:

**[www.odt.nhs.uk/statistics-and-reports](http://www.odt.nhs.uk/statistics-and-reports)**

## **NOTES**

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