



# Becoming a living donor

**How you can transform someone's  
life, while you are alive.**

Visit [organdonation.nhs.uk](https://organdonation.nhs.uk)

## What is living donation?

Healthy adults can volunteer to donate a kidney, or part of their liver, to help someone in need of a transplant.

You can choose to donate to someone you know, a friend or relative. Alternatively, you can

volunteer to donate to someone anonymously on the transplant waiting list.

The best treatment option available for most people with kidney disease is a successful transplant from a living donor. Living donor kidneys usually last longer than those from people who have died.

Visit [organdonation.nhs.uk](https://organdonation.nhs.uk) or call us **0300 123 23 23**

### Meet kidney donor Polly



Polly donated one of her kidneys to her brother Richard in 2011 to enable him to have a full life with his family.

Polly said *“From a young age my brother had a kidney problem, and I didn’t want to see him go through a lifetime of dialysis.*

*“Our parents instilled in us the importance of family and they would always tell us not to fight with our brother or sister; they will end up being your best friend - they were indeed right.*



*Polly and her brother Richard*

*“Becoming a living donor was an amazing and profound experience. To be able to give the gift of life was truly an honour and one I think more people, particularly from Black and Asian communities, should consider.”*

# Living donation - the facts



In the UK, there are more than **5,000 people** waiting for a kidney transplant and **more than 500 people** waiting for a liver transplant.

**Around 1,000 people** have donated a kidney anonymously during their lifetime to someone on the transplant waiting list. Many more have donated to a family member or friend.

1,000



Most people waiting for a transplant receive an organ from someone who has died. However, living kidney donors make **1 in 3 transplants** possible across the UK.



The average waiting time for a kidney transplant from someone who has died is **around two years**. For some ethnic groups and people for whom it is difficult to find a compatible donor, the wait is even longer.

## Can I volunteer to be a living donor?

Any adult over the age of 18 (over 16 in Scotland) can volunteer to be considered as a living donor. There is no upper age limit, as each volunteer is individually assessed.

All volunteers undergo a series of medical tests to check they are fit and healthy enough to donate. Even if you want to donate, not everyone is suitable. Your health and safety is the most important priority.

## How do I volunteer?

Whether you wish to donate to someone you know or someone you don't know on the transplant waiting list, please visit our website at [organdonation.nhs.uk/livingdonation](https://www.organdonation.nhs.uk/livingdonation) for more information first.

The next step will be to contact a living donor coordinator in a transplant centre, who can discuss your individual situation with you and help you to decide if you wish to begin the process. The contact details for all transplant centres can be found on our website.



Ceri pictured with her granddaughter Lily

## Meet kidney donor Ceri



Ceri volunteered to donate one of her kidneys to help transform the life of someone anonymously on the transplant waiting list.

Ceri says: *“When I heard that this was possible, it immediately struck a chord with me. I was fit and healthy with a full life and I wanted to do something to help someone who was not as fortunate. Not everyone understood my decision. But while we can always find reasons not to*

*do something, I prefer to look for reasons why we can.”*

Ceri went through several months of physical and psychological testing to ensure she was healthy enough to be a donor.

Five years on Ceri says, *“I have absolutely no regrets and would urge others to consider donating if they could do the same. I feel it’s a wonderful gift to be able to offer someone the chance to regain their health.”*

# What is the UK Living Kidney Sharing Scheme?

The UK Living Kidney Sharing Scheme enables adults and children to receive a living donor transplant that may not have otherwise been possible. If you wish to donate a kidney to someone you know, but you are not a suitable match for them, it may be possible for you to join the kidney sharing scheme and be matched with another donor

recipient pair in the same situation and for the donor kidneys to be exchanged. If you are donating a kidney to someone you don't know, your kidney may be offered to a high priority recipient on the transplant waiting list first. Otherwise, you will be automatically included in the kidney sharing scheme to create a chain of up to three transplants. The scheme benefits people waiting for a transplant as well as the person on the transplant waiting list who completes the chain.

## Meet kidney donor Prafula



Prafula donated one of her kidneys through the UK Living Kidney Sharing Scheme to enable her niece Shakti to receive a kidney transplant.

Shakti spent much of her childhood in and out of hospital suffering from chronic kidney disease. By the time she was 24, her kidney function had declined to six per cent and the prospect of daily dialysis loomed.

Prafula says *"I wanted to do something to help and after many tests, it was discovered I wasn't a direct match for Shakti."*

After finding out about the UK Living Kidney Sharing Scheme – a scheme which attempts to pair donors and recipients across the UK – a match

was found for Shakti. Prafula donated to someone through the scheme on the same day.

*"Shakti's transplant was a success, and she now lives a full life without dialysis. It's sometimes hard to believe it was all possible through this scheme. I would do it all again if I had another spare."*



*Prafula with her niece Shakti*

## Additional information

You can find more information about becoming a living kidney or living liver donor on our website [organdonation.nhs.uk/livingdonation](https://organdonation.nhs.uk/livingdonation) or by scanning the QR code below. Here you will also find links to other living donor and patient organisations.



Alternatively, if you would like to discuss living donation in more detail, you can call us on **0300 123 23 23**.



If you are hard of hearing, please use our text relay service:  
**18001 0300 1232323**

Text us on  
**07860 034 343**



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