

Comparison of types of transplant

This table summarises some of the transplant options that patients with insulin-treated diabetes have. Every patient is different, and it's important that you speak to your transplant team to get more detailed information directly relevant to you.

Type of transplant	Who is suitable?	Pros	Cons	Average waiting times	Average transplant outcomes
Simultaneous pancreas and kidney transplantation	Patients with insulin-treated diabetes and kidney failure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If successful, leads to freedom from insulin injections and dialysis • One operation for two conditions (diabetes, kidney disease) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long, complex surgery (4-8 hours) • Increased risk of early complications due to the need complex surgery • Unplanned (urgent) surgery 	1 year	15-20 years kidney transplant function 10-15 year pancreas transplant function
Living donor kidney transplantation alone	Patients with kidney failure with or without diabetes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a suitable living donor is found, can often be arranged fairly quickly • Less complex surgery than a SPK transplant (2-4 hours) • Planned (elective) surgery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to find a suitable living donor • Will still need insulin to treat diabetes 	2-4 months	15- 20 years kidney transplant function
Deceased donor kidney transplantation alone	Patients with kidney failure with or without diabetes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less complex surgery than a SPK transplant (2-4 hours) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unplanned (urgent) surgery • Will still need insulin to treat diabetes 	2-3 years	10-15 years kidney transplant function
Pancreas after kidney transplantation	Patients with insulin-treated diabetes who have already had a kidney transplant from a living or deceased donor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less complex surgery than a SPK transplant (2-4 hours) • If successful, leads to freedom from insulin injections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unplanned (urgent) surgery • The pancreas transplant tends not to work for as long as a pancreas transplanted as an SPK • Two separate transplants 	1 year	5-6 years pancreas transplant function

Type of transplant	Who is suitable?	Pros	Cons	Average waiting times	Average transplant outcomes
Islet after kidney transplantation	Patients with insulin-treated diabetes who have already had a kidney transplant from a living or deceased donor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If successful, leads to better blood sugar control than with insulin injections alone • Less complex surgery than pancreas transplantation (one hour) with lower early risks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less likely to lead to freedom from insulin injections than pancreas transplantation alone • Often needs repeated islet transplants to get the full effect 	1 year	5-7 years islet cell function
Simultaneous islet and kidney transplantation	Patients with insulin-treated diabetes and kidney failure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less complex surgery than a SPK transplant (2-4 hours) • One stay in hospital to treat two conditions (diabetes, kidney disease) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unplanned (urgent) surgery • Less likely to lead to freedom from insulin injections than pancreas transplantation • Often needs repeated islet transplants to get the full effect 	1 year	15-20 years kidney transplant function 5-7 years islet cell function
Pancreas transplantation alone	Patients with poorly controlled insulin-treated diabetes without kidney disease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If successful, leads to freedom from insulin injections, with better blood sugar control than with insulin or islet transplantation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires surgery (2-4 hours) with risks of early complications 	1 year	5-7 years pancreas transplant function
Islet transplantation alone	Patients with poorly controlled insulin-treated diabetes without kidney disease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If successful, leads to better blood sugar control than with insulin injections alone • Less complex surgery than pancreas transplantation (one hour) with lower early risks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less likely to lead to freedom from insulin injections than pancreas transplantation alone • Often needs repeated islet transplants to get the full effect 	1 year	5-7 years islet cell function