

TRANSPLANT NEWS

COURTESY OF
TRANSPLANT SERVICES AT UPMC HARRISBURG

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IT'S TIME TO CLEAN YOUR MEDICINE CABINET

If you have expired, unwanted, or unused medicines in your home, you're not alone. Many people fail to get rid of their unneeded drugs. Sometimes those unused and outdated prescription drugs find their way into the wrong hands — leading to accidental poisonings, misuse, and overdoses. That's why it's important to remove any expired or unused prescriptions from your medicine cabinet every year. Here are some tips to help you dispose of them safely.

Drug Take Back Programs

The best way to dispose of prescription medicines you no longer use is through a drug take back program.

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) hosts a National Prescription Drug Take Back Day (see below). Communities often set up temporary drop-off sites for residents to use.

Check with your pharmacist. Some pharmacies offer on-site drop-off boxes, mail-back programs, and other take-back options for your old medicines. To locate a collection site near you, visit dea.gov/takebackday and click on "collection site locator".

Before taking medicines to the drug take back program, be sure to:

- Remove the prescription label or cover up your personal information with a permanent marker.
- Put the medicines back into the original prescription container.
- Find out if there are any medicines they can't accept (such as inhalers and ointments).

Medicine Disposal at Home

If a drug take back program is not easily accessible, you can dispose of medicines at home by flushing them down the sink or toilet or putting them in the household trash.

Flushing Medicine

Medicines at high risk of causing immediate harm to others — including opioids — should be flushed down the sink or toilet. To find out which medicines can be flushed, check out the FDA's flush list online. Or check the patient information leaflet included with your prescription.

Disposing in Household Trash

Medicines that are NOT on the FDA flush list can be safely disposed of in your household trash by following these steps:

- **Mix** medicines (liquids or pills; do not crush tablets or capsules) with an unappealing substance such as dirt, cat litter, or used coffee grounds.
- **Place** the mixture in a sealed plastic bag or other container.
- **Throw** the container into your trash at home.
- **Delete** all personal information from the bottle or package before throwing it away.

SAVE THE DATE | NATIONAL PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE BACK DAY
Saturday, April 30, 2022 | 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For a location near you, visit dea.gov/takebackday and click on "collection site locator".



DONATE LIFE MONTH ACTIVITIES



FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 2022
Flag Raising Ceremony at
UPMC Harrisburg

A Donate Life Flag Raising Ceremony to honor organ donors will be held on Friday, April 1, at UPMC Harrisburg. UPMC in Central Pa. executives **Phil Guarneschelli, Lou Baverso, and Harold Yang, MD, PhD**, transplant program director, will participate. They will join transplant team members, hospital staff, Gift of Life Donor Program representatives, and members of the community who have been impacted by organ donation.

Donate Life flags will be raised at all UPMC campuses in the Central Pa. Region. These flags will fly throughout April to honor and remember those who provided the Gift of Life for others.

FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 2022
National Blue and Green Day

Show your colors for National Donate Life Blue and Green Day on Friday, April 22. Wear blue and green to help raise awareness of the need for organ donors. National Donate Life Blue and Green Day is held each year to encourage Americans to register as organ, eye, and tissue donors, and to honor those who have saved lives through their donations.

SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 2022
Gift of Life Donor Dash

Join the UPMC Harrisburg transplant team in supporting the 25th Annual Gift of Life Donor Dash in Philadelphia, Pa., on Sunday, April 24. The Donor Dash is the ultimate opportunity to celebrate transplant recipients, honor heroic donors, and support patients on the waitlist. There are opportunities for all ages to participate. Events include a Kids Fun Run, a 3K Walk, and a 5K or 10K Run.

UPMC Harrisburg is sponsoring a team to help raise awareness of the need for organ and tissue donation. To register for our team, visit <https://www.donors1.org/get-involved/signature-events/donor-dash/>. Click the link to register and select "UPMC Harrisburg Transplant." Everyone who registers as part of our team will receive a free T-shirt on the day of the Donor Dash. A \$35 registration fee is required and includes transportation to and from the event. We will depart Harrisburg at 4:30 a.m. to arrive in Philadelphia for the start of the Donor Dash. On our return trip to Harrisburg, we will stop for lunch. Please plan to cover the cost of your lunch. We expect to be back in Harrisburg around 4 p.m.





HEATHER ECK

I chose to be an organ donor because often when people are hurting, there is nothing you can do to help. This was one way I could help.

J.G.

My body brought my son into the world and there was never any question for me that I would happily use it to restore his health if possible.

**MY REASONING,
MY
“WHY”**

PAMELA MORRISSEY

Making the decision to donate a kidney to my Dad was a rather simple one. I knew if I ended up being a match that was all the inspiration I'd need to take the next step. Life has a way of making complex decisions rather simple when you are listening.

I am the oldest of three with three girls of my own, plus a boatload of nieces and nephews. My motivating force was to do what I could to extend our time with Dad.

I'd like to think that I helped my family as a whole by keeping us together longer. I'd also like to think that I helped my girls in the future by showing them what grit and love look like when you raise a family with a deployed soldier, hold down a job you adore, take care of your babies, and give away an organ to a loved one.

DEBORAH BEARD

My aunt was on dialysis and I wanted to donate to her. However, she said no. So I decided to donate to a stranger so they wouldn't have to live like my dear aunt did. I just wish I had more kidneys to donate.

RAY CHUNG

Whether it is donating a kidney, coaching your child's soccer team, or extending a word of encouragement, you have the potential to unleash generosity to make a positive impact and bring hope! I am not special, but this is something I can do. You don't need to be special to make a difference for someone.

LIZ LOBDELL

I thought over the years that maybe someday it would be neat to donate a kidney. When a mutual friend posted about a friend needing a kidney, I thought I was being called to see if I was a match. Little did I know he had been looking for a living donor for seven years. I just happened to be the perfect match.

I helped a friend from college who was in the music department with me. There isn't a specific reason why I donated beside that, as a believer, I felt God calling me to do this. It was the best calling I could have ever had followed. I've met amazing people through this process, helped others through their donation, and gained an extra family with my friend through my donation.



PAYGE ESCHBACH

I don't have a reason why I donated, but I sure am glad I did! Knowing that I helped save someone's life gives you a feeling that I cannot explain.

ANDREA

My father-in-law needed a kidney, and I had one. God nudged my heart and opened all the doors.

JANET F.

Because there was a young father who needed a kidney, and I had a spare. What a blessing to be able to give this gift to someone.

KAY

Because of the love of family.

REBECCA LOPEZ

The reason I donated my kidney was because I felt in my heart that it was the right thing to do. I knew that God had a plan for my recipient to get a kidney, and I just happened to be the kidney He chose to use. I had been praying, asking God to use me. As soon as my recipient started talking to my mother and me about her situation, I felt a strong calling to fill this need. I wasn't scared but more excited, knowing that I was in good hands. I was grateful that I was able to help her.

MARY OLIVEIRA

I have a friend. Who has a daughter. Who had a need. When I became aware of her situation, she was a young 22-year-old woman getting daily. There was never any hesitation on my part to at least TRY to help, without knowing what the outcome would be. Not a day goes by that I do not feel blessed and honored to have been able to change the verb tense for my friend's daughter. I am a daughter whose mother had a need and I could not help her and had to say goodbye. I am a mother of a daughter. Should she ever have a need, I pray someone else would help her. I encourage YOU to TRY.

ALISON SHULER

Almost 40 years ago I met my husband while attending summer classes at Wallops Island, Va. We immediately bonded and a friendship turned into a lifelong romance. Through the years, we have traveled to many beautiful places and have shared many special moments, like the birth of our son. I knew my husband was a diabetic and that, as we grew older, we would face many challenges. When he reached his early 50s he was told his kidneys were beginning to fail, and at some point, he would need a transplant. Reality set in when he began dialysis and the process of being approved for the transplant. Although several potential donors stepped up, health issues prevented them from being eligible. Over the years we have become each other's best friends, doing almost everything together. The thought of losing him was not an option, so I decided to enter the paired kidney exchange. In June of 2018, I donated a kidney to a couple in New York and they in return donated a kidney to him. I am forever thankful for the paired exchange program and the extended time I will be able to share with my love and best friend.

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LISA RUNDLE

My “Why” is simple: my mom. She deserved the chance to see her grandchildren grow up.

JERED LEHMAN

We are truly thankful for the entire process and everyone who made it possible.

LORRIE

I donated for love to my father. I love my father more than anything and I wanted him to be around a little longer. There was no question or hesitation about donating ever.

If you have a chance to donate a kidney, please do. You will be saving somebody’s life.

ANGELA HARRIS

I decided to “share my spare” after reading in our local newspaper that a teacher at our local high school was unable to find a match. I knew that I was in a fortunate place in my life where my family and I were all healthy. I also knew that if my loved one were ever in need, I may have to rely on my neighbor to help. I couldn’t ask that of someone else if I weren’t willing to do that myself. With the support of my family and friends, we were able to do a paired exchange. It was truly something extraordinary to be a part of.

DONNA BARONE

My daughter almost died at the age of 15 due to undetected bladder reflux, which in turn ruined her kidneys. From the minute we found out that she would one day need a transplant, I knew I wanted to donate and save her life. When the doctors said they wanted her to have a younger kidney and put us in the paired exchange, I was happy I could save my daughter’s life and someone else’s! The surgery was successful and if I had another kidney to donate, I would. I’d encourage anyone contemplating donating to do it. It will save someone’s life, maybe even two!

LISA LU

My father passed away when I was seven years old, and my mother, then only 27 years old herself, took on the task of raising me and my younger sister on her own. Only as an adult did I truly realize how much she had sacrificed to do so. She worked unfathomably hard so that my sister and I never wanted for anything. She never complained, never asked for anything for herself. When I learned that I was a match, it never occurred to me NOT to donate to her. She had given me everything she possibly could, so it was my turn to do the same.

GERT MORRISSEY-PRYOR

Donating my “spare” was such a natural response to the long ordeal my husband experienced. He never once complained about dialysis or all the things that went with it. I was offered an opportunity to change his quality of life and I was so grateful. It is the easiest and proudest thing I have ever done. We have such a wonderful life ahead of us thanks to the amazing team at UPMC.



BRIANA TOOMEY

I had no doubt in my mind when I said yes to donate a kidney to my mother. She is an amazing woman and has done so much for my family and me. I wanted her to be able to live life to the fullest again.

MARK SCRIMALLI

I donated my kidney because I was blessed with two and I realized how much giving one up could mean to someone less fortunate!

Y.S.

I would encourage any eligible candidate to consider giving the gift of life.

K.M.

The transplant team and doctors are the best!

ELIZABETH S.

I knew that my husband would need a kidney transplant one day and I had already decided that I'd be there when the time came. He is one of many in his family who would need a kidney due to a genetic kidney disease. When his mother's health started to decline and she was placed on dialysis, we discussed me testing to be a donor and from then on, it was a no brainer. Full steam ahead! When we discovered I was not a direct match, I immediately said yes to the paired exchange program. Within weeks, we had our circle of donors and recipients all set up. I'm happy to say, that two and a half years later, we are all doing great. It fills my heart to see my mother-in-law back to having energy, chasing after grandkids, and camping with the rest of us.

BUDDHI TAMANG

My husband's kidneys failed at a young age and he was on the transplant list for three years. A year and a half later, I decided I wanted to donate. I love and support him. I donated to give him a new life with our three young children. This transplant has been a blessing for our whole family.

RAFAEL VELAZQUEZ

For love or for valor? From the biblical reading in the book of John 3:16, I was able to realize that everything that is done with love has results greater than what we expect. This story speaks of the total dedication of love. The mere fact of gifting an organ will bring to our hearts satisfaction and knowledge of what it means to give life to others for love. This feeling is the true meaning of giving value for love to others. Be one more donor! I was afraid initially, but I was able to overcome that fear for the love of my wife. Win by loving another!

ANGIE NUGENT

I donated my kidney to my friend's husband for a few reasons. Nearly 20 years ago I watched his sister, my friend, go through the transplant process, as they both have polycystic kidney disease (PKD). It was so difficult and I felt for her. I've always thought the ability to donate, whether blood or organs, is amazing. So, I think the main reason I did it was simply because I could. I was lucky enough to have the capability to give something I didn't need, but that would change his life, and his family's life. I think when we have the ability to help others, we should.



By **William Hoffman, MD,**
UPMC Transplant Nephrologist

GENETICS IN KIDNEY DISEASE AND TRANSPLANTATION

By **William Hoffman, MD**, UPMC Transplant Nephrologist

TRANSPLANTATION MEDICINE has involved genetics for several decades. Genetics is the study of genes and how they influence health and disease. To understand how genetics affects kidney disease and transplantation, you need to know a little about DNA and genes.

- DNA carries instructions for making the proteins cells know what they're supposed to do.
- DNA is in each of your cells, and it contains your genes and genetic code.
- The order your DNA is in (your DNA sequence) is the same in every one of your cells.
- You inherit half of your DNA/genes from your mother and the other half from your father.
- You also share genes with each of your blood relatives.

Every human has roughly 20,000 genes. All of these genes together are called a genome. Many genes have the same DNA sequence from person to person. These genes have been passed along throughout humanity. Other genes are specific to each person — we call those genes polymorphic. Polymorphic genes come in different versions from person to person. Environmental factors along with your genes determine your traits like hair color, height, and blood type.

Genes can be dominant or recessive. Dominant genes, meaning one copy of a gene, determine a trait. Other genes can be recessive, meaning you need two of the same version of a gene to have a certain trait. Also, some traits are polygenic, which means more than one gene together determines a trait.

Genes can have mutations. Mutations occur where a sequence of DNA is different from what is usually there. These can be silent (inconsequential) mutations. Or they can alter proteins in a way that results in disease.



Continued on the next page



If you have one copy of a recessive gene that causes a disease, you usually do not have the disease but you are considered a carrier. Some genetic mutations present risk for disease, but the disease does not always occur.

Your immune system uses human leukocyte antigen (HLA) proteins to tell what is “part of you” (self) and what is “foreign” (nonself). HLA proteins have the most variety from person to person — they are the most polymorphic of all our genes. HLA polymorphism is the major determinate of immune risk and rejection after transplant.

HLA typing, or tissue typing, is used to match organ recipients with compatible donors. The more similar a recipient’s HLA proteins are to their donor’s, the lower the risk of rejection. We look at the genetic makeup (genotype) of both recipient and donor HLA genes to find out which HLA proteins will match in transplant. There are many different HLA genes/proteins.

For kidney transplant we focus on three genes/proteins: “A, B, and DR.” You have two of each HLA protein (one from mom and one from dad). That’s why you may hear people talk about “6 of 6 match” or “0 of 6 mismatch,” etc. We also can do testing to determine if your body already has antibodies formed against the donor’s antigens, which would put you at high risk for rejection.

Genetic testing has become faster, less expensive, and more available than ever before. Because of this, more is being learned about the genetics of kidney health. For example, we’ve found that certain kidney diseases (like polycystic kidney disease, Alport syndrome, and some forms of focal segmental glomerulosclerosis, or FSGS) have a genetic basis. Other kidney diseases may have genetic variants that present risk, but it’s not yet clear why the disease only manifests in some individuals with the mutation.

Studying the genetics of kidney disease locally

At UPMC in Central Pa., we are now participating in two multi-center trials to better understand the role of genetics in kidney disease — the APOLLO study and the RenaCARE study.

The APOLLO study is sponsored by the National Institutes of Health. It is investigating the effect of apolipoprotein L1 (APOL1) gene variants on outcomes for kidneys from donors with African ancestry and the recipients of their kidneys. People with African ancestry are more likely to have the APOL1 gene variants that cause kidney disease.

This study will test DNA from kidney donors and transplant recipients for APOL1 gene variants around the time of transplant. Routine blood work will be used to evaluate kidney function of participants following the transplant. You may be asked if you would like to participate in the study. If you agree, you’ll be asked to sign a consent form.

RenaCARE is a study of the Natera company’s Renasight™ test. This test is used to determine the DNA sequencing of roughly 380 genes associated with chronic kidney disease and look for mutations. The purpose of this study is to assess the test’s effectiveness and evaluate its potential use in disease management. You may be asked to participate, particularly if a genetic cause for your kidney disease is suspected.

These studies will help us learn and better understand how genetics influence kidney disease and outcomes. Only certain patients will qualify for these studies. Participation is completely voluntary and will require your official consent. It’s important that you know the transplant care from our office will be the same regardless of whether or not you participate in a study.

Transplant outcomes have improved greatly over the roughly 60 years of kidney transplantation. It is amazing how much we now know. But there is still much left to learn. Research is the main way we can continue to improve over time, especially for future patients. Learning more about the significance of genetic variations will likely help us better customize our treatments and approach to medical care.

PAIRED EXCHANGE PROGRAM

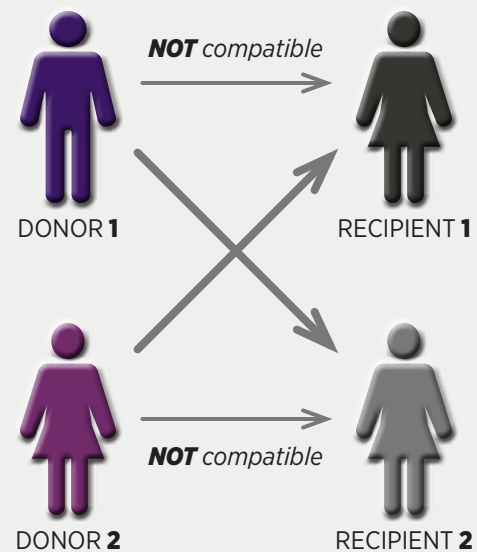
By **Christina L. Heming, BSN, RN**

People who need a kidney transplant must have a compatible donor for the transplant to be successful. Donors and recipients may be incompatible for various reasons. They may have different blood types or antibodies. And, sometimes donor size and stature do not match. In some cases, a living kidney donor steps forward but is found to be incompatible with the person in need. This is where the paired exchange program can help.

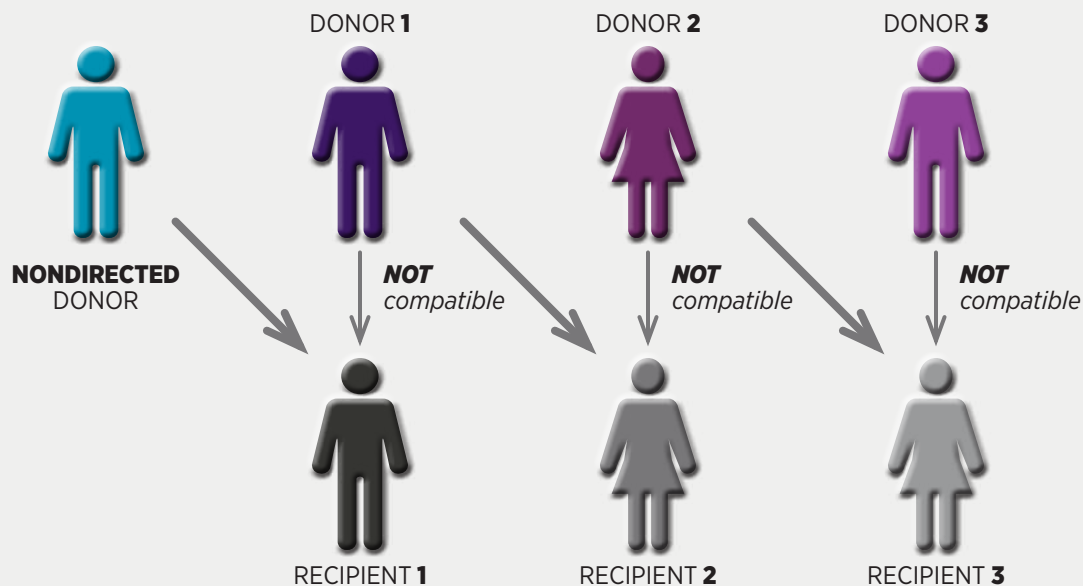
Paired exchange is when a donor from one pair is compatible with a recipient from another pair and vice versa. Then a “swap” can be arranged, allowing two transplants to take place.

Another option is a nondirected donor starting what’s called a Never Ending Altruistic Donor (NEAD™) chain. A nondirected donor is also called an altruistic donor. A NEAD chain begins when an altruistic donor donates their kidney to a person waiting for a transplant. Then that person’s incompatible donor donates to another person waiting for a transplant, and so on. With this kind of pay-it-forward living kidney donation, one donor can play a role in helping several people waiting for a transplant.

PAIRED EXCHANGE



NEAD CHAIN



If you are interested in learning more about paired exchange or how to become a living kidney donor, call our office at **877-778-6110** or go to [UPMC.com/services/south-central-pa/transplant/living-donor-kidney](https://www.upmc.com/services/south-central-pa/transplant/living-donor-kidney).



My rationale:



Why I chose to **DONATE MY KIDNEY**

By Greg Bunn



On Aug. 5, 2021, I became an altruistic kidney donor. I donated my left kidney to a stranger in South Dakota. After the surgery, I was told the recipient — a man — accepted the kidney with no complications. I have not had any communication from my recipient, who continues to remain anonymous.

Continued on the next page



I AM PROUD OF WHAT I HAVE DONE. YOU NEVER KNOW WHO MIGHT BE LISTENING TO YOUR STORY. AND YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT YOU MIGHT LEARN ABOUT YOURSELF WHEN YOU TELL IT.

Four months later, on Dec. 18 — the day after my 32nd birthday — I was with my wife and some friends celebrating when my sister called. I assumed she was calling to wish me happy birthday but that wasn't it. She was calling with a friend who had something important to discuss.

"I have my friend here, and she wants to talk with you about becoming a kidney donor, if that's OK?" she asked.

Over the next 20 to 30 minutes, we discussed my experiences as a kidney donor — the highs and lows, my motivations, insecurities, and rationale. I learned that she had been thinking of becoming a donor for some time now. But when she heard my story from my sister, she knew that now was the time to put her thoughts into action. I was honored and touched that I had inspired someone to become an altruistic kidney donor.

During the conversation, I was inevitably asked one of the more popular questions I receive when talking about my experience: "So, what was your motivation to donate? Did something or someone inspire you?"

"Well," I replied, "I listened to a podcast about altruistic donation and I thought it might be something I was interested in." A boring, but true, response. Just then, I had an epiphany of sorts. I decided that my motivation and inspiration for donation is not what I should be talking about.

What I really wanted to explain was my *rationale* — the justification to myself for why I chose to donate. As is well-known, there are significant health risks that should be considered when becoming a donor. And having two healthy kidneys is always going to be better than having one. In other words, donors see no physical benefits. The benefit is always a psychological reward — something we can feel good about.

I explained my rationale for donating:

1. With sweeping generalization, kidney diseases typically affect both kidneys. Save for an unfortunate accident that damages my remaining kidney, any disease or sickness I might get later in life likely would affect both of my kidneys anyway.
2. I am healthy enough to donate *now* and am eligible to donate *now*. I may not be in the same health to donate in the future. Through the National Kidney Registry (NKR) voucher program, I am able to donate now and save a voucher for one of my listed family members or friends, should one of them need a kidney in the future.

This rationale did not occur to me until after donation, when I was struggling to find meaning for my donation. It's easy to ride the wave of motivation and inspiration during the donation process. My adrenaline pumped every time I walked into the transplant offices on the eighth floor of the Brady Building at UPMC Harrisburg. There, I was (and still am!) greeted with the friendly, familiar faces of those who were there to care for me throughout the process. After donation though, as an altruistic donor who has an anonymous recipient, I struggled with the draining adrenaline and thoughts of "Why?"

The "Why?" question was difficult to answer until the rationale of my experience became apparent. Why did I do this? Why did I go through this much pain for a stranger? My "Why?" was answered through my rationale. I'll continue to lead a healthy life after donation, and if my family needs a kidney in the future — well, I gave them as close to a golden ticket as they could ask for if it comes to that. The NKR voucher gives my family members or friends a priority place the kidney transplant list. I'm also on that list, so it's added insurance that eases my mind a bit about any future complications.

Every day, I think of my donation experience and am reminded of it by the three incrementally sized incisions along my left abdomen. My unknown recipient occasionally will make an appearance as a character in one of my dreams; it makes for a better morning knowing that he is healthy.

My life since the donation has not changed much. I am able to run, hike, and ride my bike. I drink a little more water, and I get meaner looks from my wife when I eat too many cookies during the holiday season. Now, nearing six months post-op (at the time I am writing this), I feel as if I have two kidneys, and I notice no discernible physical differences from before my donation.

I am proud of what I have done. And while I may not be telling my story as much to the people in my life anymore, it still lives on with me, waiting for others to hear and maybe be inspired enough to join the club in their own time. You never know who might be listening to your story. And you never know what new things you might learn about yourself when you tell it.

LIVING DONOR NEWS

More than ever, people are connecting through social media. It's fun to give and receive information and share likes, dislikes, photos, and videos. Social media is also a great way to raise awareness.

With more than 1.4 billion users, Facebook is the most popular social network. In 2021, the UPMC Harrisburg living donor kidney transplant team started a private Facebook group. It is used to share information with previous and potential living kidney donors – with great success! Our goal is to provide a safe place where living kidney donors can give and get support, ask questions, share thoughts and concerns, and provide encouragement to one another. The name of our Facebook group is “UPMC Harrisburg Living Kidney Donors, Saving Lives through Donation.” An invitation to join is extended only to donors or potential donors from our Center.

The team also created the **Living Donor Mentor Program**. It connects potential living kidney donors with previous living kidney donors. These individuals share what they know about the process and provide support. We are fortunate to have so many living kidney donors who are willing to share their personal experience and knowledge with others. Mentors are of various ages, cultural backgrounds, sex, and donation types. Donors often tell us how much they appreciate the opportunity to connect with mentors. They also appreciate how helpful it is to talk with someone who donated through our living kidney donor program.



Join the UPMC Harrisburg Transplant Team for the 2022 Donor Dash

Each April, Gift of Life hosts the Donor Dash in celebration of the life-saving power of organ and tissue donation and to honor the donors who make it possible. Participants can select from a 10K or 5K Kids Fun Run or a 3K walk. The dash will start at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Date: Sunday, April 24

Registration Fee: \$35/person
Includes roundtrip transportation to Philadelphia and a free UPMC T-shirt.*



Schedule:

Leave Harrisburg	Approximately 4:30 a.m.
Registration opens	6 a.m.
10K Run	7:10 a.m.
5K Run	7:20 a.m.
Kids Fun Run	7:45 a.m.
3K Walk	8:30 a.m.
Return to Harrisburg	Approximately 4 p.m.

To register for our team, visit <https://www.donors1.org/get-involved/signature-events/donor-dash/>. Click the link to register and select “UPMC Harrisburg Transplant.”

Registration deadline is April 10.



More details coming.

A special thank you to the UPMC Pinnacle Foundation for sponsoring our transportation.

**UPMC T-shirts will be available to the first 100 registrants.*

UPMC
LIFE CHANGING MEDICINE

Searching for a Living Kidney Donor

The search for a living kidney donor can feel overwhelming and stressful. But asking for help can relieve some of that stress and help spread the word. Your support system can help you share your need for a living kidney donor through social media, flyers, car magnets, T-shirts, yard signs, and community events.

Here are some things to keep in mind as you search for a living kidney donor:

DO:

- Use the UPMC Harrisburg phone number — **717-231-8700**.
- Put your first and last name on ALL materials.
- Post often on social media (preferably 80 characters or less).
- Stay positive.
- Keep the conversation going with friends and family.
- Refer any interested persons to the UPMC Harrisburg transplant team.
- Ask permission to post flyers in public areas — restaurants, churches, gyms, hair/nail salons, etc.

DON'T:

- Use any personal contact information (not your personal phone number, email address, etc.).
- List your blood type, age, or any other identifying information.
- Write all about your medical history.
- Get discouraged if someone is not interested.
- Be afraid to ask for help (from friends, family, or members of the transplant team).
- Answer questions about the donor process; refer the person to our office to get those answers (**717-231-8700**).
- Rule anyone out — encourage anyone who's interested in donating to call our office.

5 Advantages of Receiving a Living Donor Kidney Transplant

Transplanted kidneys from living donors have many advantages over those from people who have died.

That often means better outcomes for recipients.

1 Living donor kidneys last longer. In fact, they can last up to 25 years with the proper care. That's nearly double the 13 years for kidneys from deceased donors. Living donors are some of the healthiest people around. They go through a rigorous evaluation of their kidney function and overall physical health. Their emotional, psychological, and social well-being also are reviewed before they can donate an organ.

2 Kidneys from living donors usually begin to function immediately. Only 4% of recipients who receive a living organ need dialysis after transplantation. That greatly decreases complications. Kidneys from deceased donors can be affected by the time spent in cold preservation during transport. About one third of these kidneys take weeks or even months to become fully functional. This can lead to dialysis and an increased complication rate for the recipient.

3 Living donor kidney transplants can be scheduled in advance. This makes it easier for the donor and recipient to prepare for surgery. It also gives them time to arrange for things like childcare, pet care, transportation, and postoperative care.

4 A living donor kidney transplant can often be arranged sooner. There is a long waitlist for a kidney from a deceased donor. While waiting, patients can become too sick to go ahead with a transplant. With a living donor, a recipient doesn't have to spend a long time on a transplant list and risk getting sicker.

5 Every living donor transplant removes one person from the transplant waitlist! This moves the next person up the list and ensures that they won't need to wait quite as long for a deceased donor transplant.

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