



Dave, kidney transplant recipient

Overcoming Common Kidney Donation Myths

MYTHS (FALSE)

- ✗ The donor will have many out of pocket expenses.
- ✗ Once a donor begins the donor evaluation process, that person may feel obligated and afraid to change her or his mind.
- ✗ My religion prevents me from being a donor.
- ✗ If a person does not offer to donate, that must mean the person is not interested in donating.
- ✗ A donor will have trouble getting health insurance/life insurance after s/he donates.
- ✗ Living kidney donors won't live healthy lives with just one kidney.
- ✗ Living kidney donors live a shorter life.
- ✗ Living kidney donors are more likely to get kidney disease after donating.

FACTS (TRUE)

- ✓ The medical costs are covered by the recipient's insurance. People can apply for grants to help with uncovered costs.
- ✓ A donor can change their mind at any time.
- ✓ Most religions support living donation.
- ✓ Many people don't know that living donation is an option.
- ✓ There are protections in place to ensure donors have appropriate access to care.
- ✓ Donors are carefully screened to ensure they are healthy and can have a nephrectomy. They are encouraged to have regular checkups and follow a healthy lifestyle.
- ✓ There is no evidence that donation shortens a person's lifespan.
- ✓ Donors are counseled about their individual risk associated with donation.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

NKF Cares Help Line
855.653.2273
nkfcares@kidney.org

NKF Peers Support Program
855.653.7337
nkfpeers@kidney.org

MYTHS (FALSE)

-  Only younger people should be able to get kidney transplants.
-  Adults over age 50 can't donate.
-  Those with tattoos and LGBT people can't be living kidney donors.
-  A kidney donor can no longer participate in sports or exercise.
-  Kidney donors will have to take medications for the rest of their lives.
-  A kidney donor will have debilitating pain for an extended period of time.
-  A kidney donor will be in the hospital for an extended period of time after surgery.
-  Living kidney donors don't get to choose to the person who gets their kidney.
-  A donor will have to follow a new diet plan following donation.
-  A donor can no longer consume alcohol following donation.
-  A female donor should not get pregnant after donation.
-  A donor's sex life will be negatively affected by donation.

FACTS (TRUE)

-  All patients who are medically suitable are eligible for transplants.
-  Donors must be healthy and can donate primarily on a basis of health, not age.
-  All donors are medically screened and for infectious diseases, such as hepatitis, and are only cleared if it is safe for both the donor and recipient.
-  A donor should be able to return to regular activities and exercise about 4 to 6 weeks after surgery.
-  Generally, prescriptions for pain and stool softeners will be necessary only in the immediate postoperative period.
-  Ordinarily, there will be some pain after surgery, which will diminish and can be controlled with pain medication.
-  A kidney donor will be hospitalized, on average, for 2 nights.
-  A donor can select a person they know.
-  A donor should eat a healthy, well-balanced diet, but there are no dietary restrictions
-  While excessive alcohol use is always dangerous to one's health, a kidney donor can consume alcohol in moderation.
-  A female donor should wait to become pregnant until medically cleared after donation.
-  Donors may engage in sexual activity when they feel well enough to do so.

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