



LIVING DONOR CANDIDATE PROCESS TIMELINE



HEALTH
UNIVERSITY OF UTAH



GIFTWORKS

Donor Evaluation and Donation Process: A Step-by-Step Guide for University of Utah Health Living Donors

This process is intended for donors who live in Utah, Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho. Because Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho do not have transplant centers, donors from these states typically travel to Utah for evaluation and donation. However, if you have a support system in another state and prefer to complete the process elsewhere, you are welcome to do so. The outline below assumes you will be donating in Utah. If you plan to be evaluated and donate at a different transplant center, please refer to the **Remote Donor Process** for more information.



LIVING DONOR EVALUATION PROCESS

1. FIRST STEPS

Blood pressures x5
Education class
Advocate phone call

3. PSYCHOSOCIAL SCREENING

Social work phone call

5. SELECTION COMMITTEE

Review of records

7. SURGERY

Pre-op labs
Pre-op appointment
Minimally invasive

2. INITIAL SCREENING

Abdominal CT scan
Intake call
Initial screening labs
Potential repeat labs

4. CLINIC APPOINTMENT

In person appointment
Meet transplant team
Labs
Imaging

6. APPROVED FOR DONATION

Direct donation vs.
Paired donation

8. POST-OPERATIVE

Immediate follow-up
Long term follow-up





1

First Steps

Introductory Call with Your GiftWorks Living Donor Navigator

Connect with an independent, experienced donor for a confidential overview of the process and a chance to ask questions. *(10–30 minutes)*

Complete the Online Health Questionnaire

Use the recipient's name and DOB provided via email. This step does not commit you to donating—it simply determines if further evaluation is appropriate. *(30–40 minutes)*

Donor Education Training

Watch the on-demand education series, then complete a short quiz to demonstrate your understanding of the material. *(40–60 minutes)*

Report Blood Pressure Readings

Take and record five readings to share with the Living Donor Team.

Activate MyChart

Sign up for the University of Utah's electronic patient portal using the link provided.

ILDA Interview

Within a week of completing the steps above, an Independent Living Donor Advocate (ILDA) will conduct a confidential phone interview. *(20 minutes)*

2

Initial Screening

CT Scan

A scan of your kidneys is scheduled locally, if possible. This determines which kidney is best for donation. If not feasible locally, it will be done during your clinic visit. *(1 hour)*

Surgical Review

A surgeon will review your CT scan (typically within 1–2 weeks). If you're a surgical candidate, the RN will order your labs.

RN Medical History Review

A transplant nurse will review your personal/family history and explain next steps. If your BMI is over 30, weight loss support resources will be offered. *(30–45 minutes)*

Urine Labs

A 24-hour urine collection checks kidney function via creatinine clearance and protein levels.

Blood Labs

Labs assess overall health and screen for kidney, liver, thyroid, heart, and metabolic function, plus drug and nicotine use. Labs can be completed locally (e.g., at Quest). Notify both your RN and transplant coordinator once you have completed your labs. *(20 minutes)*

Cancer Screenings

If your cervical, breast, or colon cancer screenings are not up to date, you will need to complete the appropriate tests. Lung cancer screening may be requested on a case-by-case basis.

3

Psychosocial Screening

Speak With Your Social Worker

You'll meet with a social worker and/or an ILDA to ensure you:

- Understand the donation process
- Have adequate social support
- Are aware of financial assistance for travel, lost wages, and other expenses

(Duration: 30–60 minutes)

Clinical Scheduling

Once cleared by the social worker, a Living Donor Team member will schedule your in-person clinic visit at University of Utah Health.

4 Clinic Appointment

In-Person Visit at University of Utah Health (Salt Lake City)

Held Mondays and Wednesdays. You'll meet with the Nephrologist, Surgery Team, Nurse Coordinator, Social Worker, Donor Advocate, and Dietitian. (4–6 hours)

Medical Testing Includes:

Vitals, blood work, chest X-ray, EKG, echocardiogram, and a CT scan (if not already completed). All costs are covered by the recipient's insurance.



5 Selection Committee & Surgery Scheduling

Interdisciplinary Team Review

A transplant team—including medical, surgical, and psychosocial experts—will review your complete evaluation to determine approval.

Surgery Scheduling

Once you're approved, surgery is typically scheduled no earlier than about four weeks from the time of approval to allow for coordination and planning. As the donor, you'll have the opportunity to share your preferred timing so the procedure can be scheduled at your convenience.

6

Approved for Donation

Pre-Op Labs

To be completed 10–14 days before surgery. A kit is mailed, and labs can be done locally. These are time-sensitive.

Pre-Op Surgical Appointment

Occurs 7–14 days before surgery; can be virtual or in-person.

7

Surgery

Admission

Donors are admitted the morning of surgery.

Surgery Duration: 2–4 hours

Procedure Overview

- Laparoscopic, minimally invasive technique
- Abdomen inflated with CO₂ for visibility
- Small incisions for camera and surgical tools
- 4-inch incision made to remove kidney
- Left kidney is typically used due to longer vein
- Surgeon will discuss the approach and incision location with you

Hospital Stay

Most donors stay 1–2 nights and receive:

- Pain and nausea medications
- IV fluids
- Support walking soon after surgery to relieve gas pain and prevent clots
- Compression stockings for circulation support



IMPORTANT NOTE:

Surgeries may be rescheduled if transplant surgeons/OR are needed for deceased donor cases.



8 Post-Operative

Lodging Post-Discharge

If you live more than 5 hours away, you may be more comfortable staying nearby for 2-3 days to rest and recover. Your social worker can help you get your lodging expenses reimbursed if you qualify. Discuss this with your social worker in advance.

Caregiver Support

Required for the first two weeks post-surgery.

Time Off Work

Expect 2–8 weeks off, depending on your job.

There is a 10 lb. weight restriction for 6–8 weeks. Most donors with desk jobs return to work within a few weeks. The human body can function well with just one kidney, and donors are expected to lead healthy, normal lives.

Follow-Up Care

- Nurse call within 1 week of discharge
- 2-week follow-up visit (virtual or in-person)
- Lab tests and a short questionnaire at 6, 12, and 24 months (can be completed up to 2 months early)
- Optional 1-year clinic visit—discuss with your coordinator



University of Utah Health's kidney transplant program has been caring for patients with end-stage renal disease since 1965. In 1977, the program became a Medicare-approved center. Since that time, we have continued to do a high number of adult and pediatric kidney transplants with survival rates higher than the national average.

We know that patients have unique needs. We provide different types of kidney transplantation to best serve patients and their families. Our kidney transplant program takes a multidisciplinary approach, providing patients access to a team of health care professionals who are experienced in all medical and surgical aspects of transplantation, including board-certified adult and pediatric transplant nephrologists.



The Giftworks program has three pillars designed to serve both the kidney recipient and anyone who steps forward to be tested as a living donor. We believe that just as recipients deserve education and support, so too do the generous people that step forward as living donors. Our goal is to make sure that both the recipient and the donor feel equally supported, empowered, and part of an amazing exchange that is both lifesaving and beautiful.



50 North Medical Dr. E-2400
Salt Lake City, Utah 84132

healthcare.utah.edu/transplant/kidney/