What are the steps in donating a kidney?

• Donation is a personal choice. The potential donor must make the first contact with the donor coordinator to express interest in donation. The donor team provides information about kidney donation.

• Beginning the evaluation: Once the recipient is approved for a transplant, the donor can be scheduled for the tests needed to ensure that donor candidates have minimal risks in pursuing this surgery. All information is kept confidential.

• Setting the surgical date. Once the donor meets with the donor surgeon and is approved to proceed, the transplant surgery can be scheduled.

• At any time in this process, the donor has the option to decide against donating.

How long is the donor in the hospital?

• The average stay in the hospital is two to three days.

• After discharge, the donor meets with the surgeon for a follow-up visit.

• Kidney donors are advised to have follow-up appointments with their primary care physician at six months, 12 months and yearly thereafter.

“I was thrilled to learn this donation was bigger than just the two of us. It is a remarkable feeling.”

— Living kidney donor

Our legacy is yours.
Legacy Health strives to make responsible printing and paper choices that minimize our effect on natural resources.

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Living kidney donation is a chance to enrich or even save someone’s life. These are among the rewards for those who have made the generous decision to become a living kidney donor.

Donate to a family member, a friend or a person you don’t know — if you choose to become a living kidney donor you donate one of your kidneys to make a remarkable difference in someone’s life.

Says one donor, “It has been a great honor to be able to do something this profound to help a person’s health and lifestyle.”

It is a meaningful act, but not one you should take lightly. This brochure offers information to help you make an informed decision.

Why be a living donor?
Currently, more than 80,000 people are waiting for deceased kidneys in the U.S. In Oregon, the average wait for a deceased kidney is about two years. With a living donor, it is possible to receive a kidney in a few months.

What are the advantages for the recipient?
To the person who receives the kidney, there are many benefits of a living donation. Among them:

• Better preparation: the surgery can be planned and scheduled.
• There is a potential for closer genetic matching when the donor is a blood relative.
• The transplant may be scheduled before the recipient needs to begin dialysis.
• A kidney from a living donor can last almost twice as long as a kidney from a deceased donor.
• The kidney from a living donor usually starts working in the recipient immediately after surgery.
• A living donor transplant makes one more kidney available to a person who does not have a living donor.

Who can be a living donor?
Potential donors must be at least 18 years old, in excellent health and want to donate. A donor does not have to be a blood relative.

Types of donations
• Directed donation — giving to someone you know, a friend, relative, coworker, neighbor;
• Non-directed donation — giving to a non-specified recipient; and
• Paired exchange — when the donor and recipient do not match blood or tissue types, they agree to “swap” with another donor/recipient pair with whom they are compatible. We find the match.

What are the risks to the donor?
For healthy adults, the risks of surgery are low. Consider:

• Potential living donors are evaluated carefully to make sure they are healthy, and it is safe for them to donate.
• Our physicians discuss the surgical risks and potential long-term health risks with each perspective donor.
• People can live healthy lives with just one kidney.

What are the financial costs for the donor?
The cost of the donor’s evaluation, hospitalization and follow-up visit are covered by the recipient’s insurance.

The donor social worker assists in planning for time lost from work, the impact on your family and other aspects of surgery and recovery.