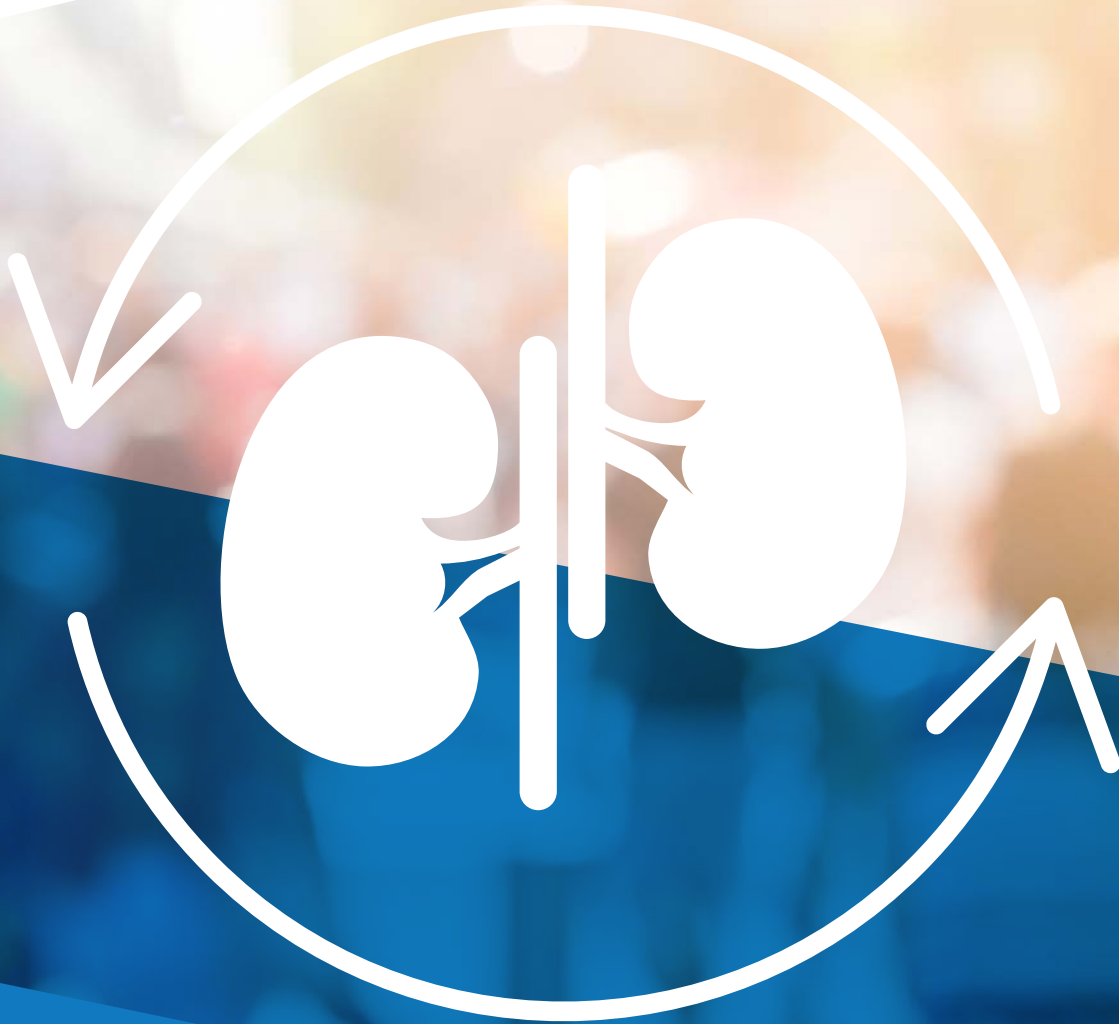


JUST MY TYPE

TRANSPLANT PATIENTS

Finding your living donor match.



MY TYPE OF JOURNEY

A kidney transplant can be the difference between a life on dialysis and a life full of your favorite activities. It can be the difference between living and being alive.

But finding your perfect donor match can sometimes be more difficult than the surgery itself.

As the only kidney transplant center in West Virginia, CAMC offers expert, innovative and personalized treatment for patients living with advanced kidney disease.

CAMC is home to an experienced and highly skilled team of specialists who will take you through every step of the transplant process — from finding and choosing a donor to surgery and beyond.

For us, the best outcome means a normal, independent lifestyle for you.

Let us help you find someone who is just your type.

MY TYPE OF PLAN

These first steps can help you get started on your road to transplant surgery.



Know the facts.

It is important to learn as much about living donation as you can — not just for your own peace of mind, but also so you can communicate the benefits clearly and effectively to those around you.

Go to healthcare providers with your questions and concerns. Compare life on dialysis to life after transplant. Learn about the risks and benefits of each treatment.



Make a list.

Many people have never even heard of living donation. Even though your family and friends know that you are sick, they may not understand that a living person can donate one of their kidneys to you, or that your life could greatly improve with a kidney transplant.

Make a list of everyone who could be a possible donor for you. Family members and friends, and people from church, school and work could all be possible donors.

Don't worry about who will say "yes" or "no" at first. You may be surprised who comes forward to donate in the end.



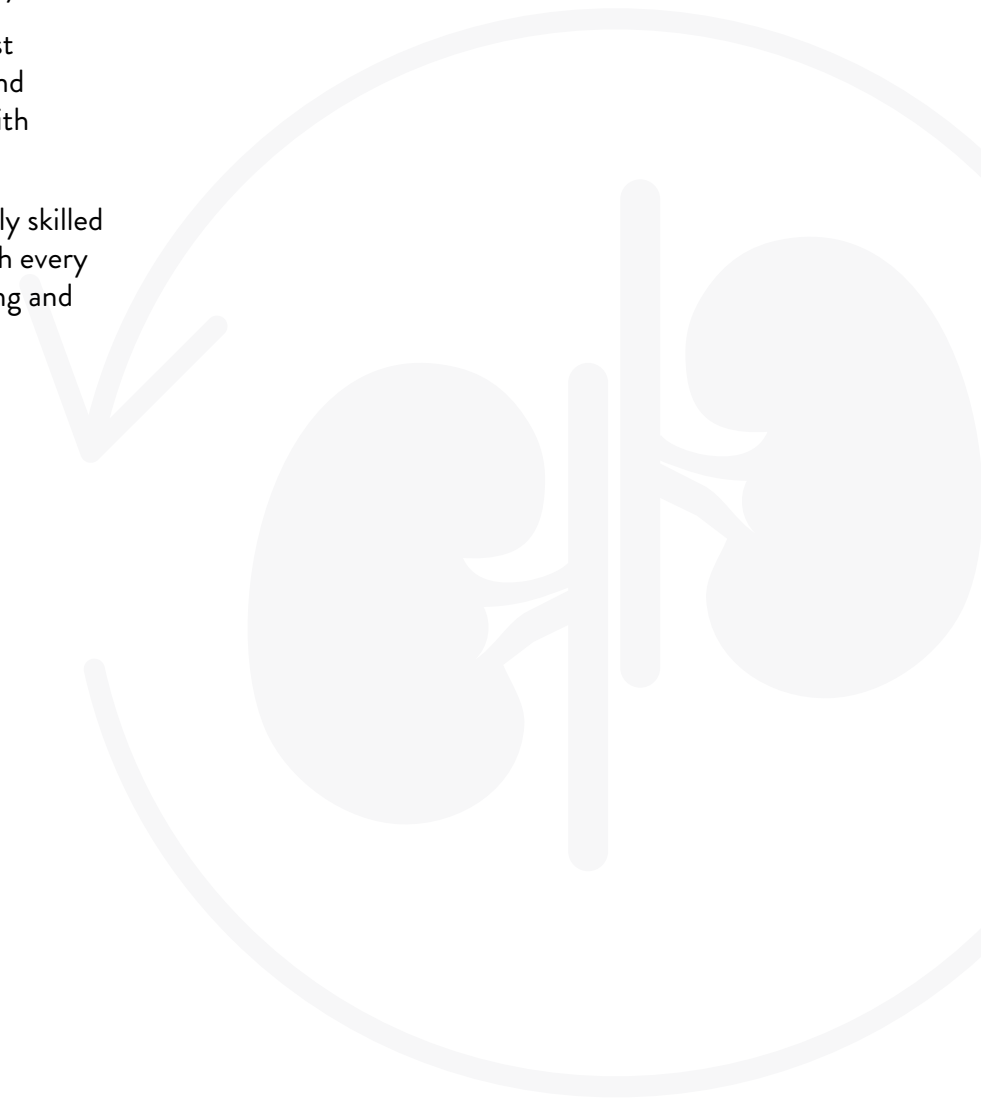
Spread the word.

Since approaching the subject of living donation can be difficult, choose a way to talk about it that is comfortable for you. Sometimes the best way to start that conversation is also the simplest — by telling your story.

Be open about how sick you are, how anxious you may be about the future, and what life is like on dialysis. You don't have to actually ask for a kidney.

It is important to talk to as many people as you can. The more people who know you need a kidney, the better your chances are of finding someone who is willing to donate.

Anyone who wants to donate will be evaluated for general health and to see whether the kidney is a good match.



MY TYPE OF **OUTREACH**

The best way to find a living donor is to share your story and expand your options.



Post your interest in living donation on social media.

Many patients use sites like Facebook to share their stories. People can share your posts on their own pages, creating a larger audience that is aware of your need for a donation.



Share your need for a living donor within your community.

You may also want to reach out to your favorite clubs and organizations.

Ask potential donors to donate a kidney to you.



You may feel most comfortable speaking with someone privately about your need for a transplant and your interest in finding a living donor.

If a potential donor asks questions about your condition or how transplantation works, answer their questions, give them one of our CAMC living donation brochures, or refer them to a medical professional at a transplant center.

MY TYPE OF **SUPPORT**

When you educate your family and friends and keep them informed, they can become your best donor champions.



Don't be shy about sharing your story.

It might feel uncomfortable at first, but you'll be surprised at how caring those around you can be once you share your story. The more people who understand your need, the more opportunities you will uncover to connect with a potential donor.



Allow other people to talk about your need for a living donor.

Although your search for a donor can feel very private, your loved ones want to help you. Keep family and friends updated so that they can spread the word and increase your chances of finding a living kidney donor.



Meet with close family and friends face-to-face.

Some information is best shared in person. When meeting with family and friends, try to pick a place that works well for everyone and where you feel comfortable.



Communicate your need for a living donor to people in your life in written form.

A letter or email has the advantage of communicating personally and privately while clearly getting your point across. Emails are also shareable, making it easy to spread the word.

MY TYPE OF DONOR

To find your perfect match, it is important that you give each potential donor the right to say “yes” or “no” to donation.

⊗ What if a potential donor says “no”?

If the person says “no” or does not offer to be a donor, this answer does not mean that the person does not care for you. It just means that the person chooses not to be a donor or has circumstances preventing them from doing so. Thank the person for learning more about living donation and for thinking about donating to you.

Also, remember that just because one person says “no” doesn’t mean everyone will say “no.” Focus your energy on finding someone who really wants to donate a kidney and who will feel good about their decision.

✓ What if a potential donor says “yes”?

The next step would be to give him or her the phone number of the transplant center to make an appointment and fill out the donor paperwork to begin testing. If multiple people offer, encourage all of them to call the transplant center, because some potential donors may not match you.

Know that the transplant center will do many medical tests on the donor. They will also talk with the donor privately to make sure that he or she understands everything about donation and does not feel pressured.

They will not allow the potential donor to donate unless there are no major medical, psychological or financial risks to him or her.

👁️ What makes someone my type?

Once someone says “yes” to being your donor, they’ll need to match the following criteria.

Blood type
Your blood type (A, B, AB, or O) must be compatible with the donor’s blood type.

Antibodies
Your immune system may produce antibodies that act specifically against something in the donor’s tissue. To see whether this is the case, a small sample of your blood will be mixed with a small sample of the donor’s blood in a tube. If no reaction occurs, you should be able to accept the kidney.

✂️ What if my donor is not a match?

If you are not a match with your donor, you could still be a candidate for an exchange.

Example: Barbara wants to donate to her sister Donna but they do not have the same blood type. Carlos wants to donate to his wife Maria but they also are not compatible. By “swapping” donors, two transplants are made possible.

Barbara (donor).....**Donna** (recipient/candidate)

Carlos (donor).....**Maria** (recipient/candidate)

MY TYPE OF SURGERY

Once you’ve made the decision to undergo surgery, your doctor or dialysis unit can initiate the process.

⊕ Receive a medical evaluation at the transplant hospital.

The pre-transplant evaluation may require several visits over the course of many weeks or even months. You’ll need to have blood drawn and X-rays taken. You’ll be tested for blood type and other matching factors that determine whether your body will accept an available kidney.

The medical team will want to see whether you’re healthy enough for surgery. Cancer, a serious infection, or a significant cardiovascular disease would make transplantation unlikely to succeed. In addition, the medical team will want to make sure that you can understand and follow the schedule for taking medicines.

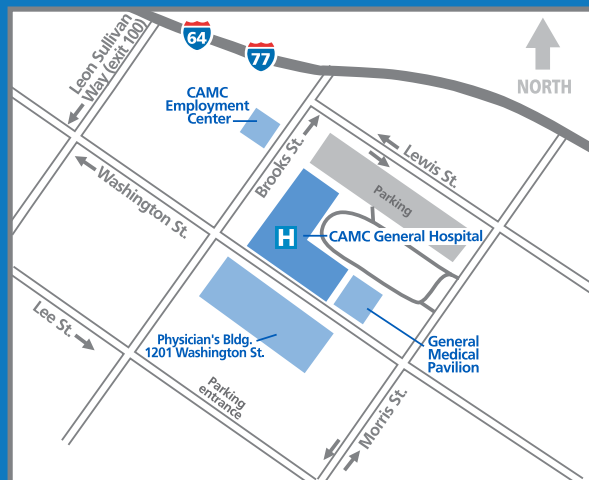
👤 Schedule your appointment with your living donor.

If you have a living donor, you’ll schedule the operation in advance. You and your donor will be operated on at the same time, usually in side-by-side operating rooms.

One team of surgeons will perform the nephrectomy — that is, the removal of the kidney from the donor — while another team prepares the recipient for placement of the donated kidney.

🏥 Expect to feel better soon.

Similar to any major surgery, you’ll probably feel sore and groggy when you wake up. However, many transplant recipients report feeling much better immediately after surgery. Even if you wake up feeling great, you’ll need to stay in the hospital for up to a week to recover from surgery, and longer if you have any complications.



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KIDNEY
TRANSPLANT CENTER



Charleston Area
Medical Center