

Checklist for Preparing for Kidney Donation

Thank you for thinking about giving the life-changing gift of donating your kidney. Getting a kidney from a living donor means the recipient doesn't have to wait on a waiting list. Also, they usually get a better-performing kidney.

Stanford Health Care lets people of all blood types donate for their intended recipient. You don't need to be a blood-type match with the person you know who needs a kidney.

Donating a kidney is a major decision. It's important to know the process and the risks.

The donation process usually takes 3 to 6 months. You will have a team: a nurse, a social worker, a kidney doctor, a surgeon, and an advocate to support and protect you.

Based on your age, you may need cancer screening tests. You don't pay for needed tests or medical visits.

Always remember, we are here to help you all along the way.

Checklist

Disclaimer: This checklist is a guide to help you navigate the evaluation process. Each donor evaluation is unique. It depends on the needs of the donor. You may need other tests or medical visits.

- Health questionnaire, done online or by phone
- Laboratory tests
 - Complete blood count (CBC)
 - Comprehensive metabolic panel (CMP)
 - Blood type (checked twice)
 - Cholesterol
 - Urine test
 - 24-hour urine collection
 - Tissue typing or compatibility testing
 - Infectious disease tests
- Imaging
 - Computed tomography (CT) scan of your abdomen and pelvis
 - Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)*
 - Chest X-ray (CXR)
 - Nuclear medicine study*
- Heart testing
 - Electrocardiogram (EKG)

- () Heart (cardiac) stress test*
- Meetings with your:
 - () Living donor nurse coordinator
 - () Independent living donor advocate (ILDA)
 - () Social worker
- On your own
 - () Check with your doctor to find out if you are up to date on all cancer screenings.
 - () Transplant psychiatry*
 - () Transplant kidney medical checkup
 - () Transplant surgical checkup
 - () Donation surgery

*May not be needed.

Information for lab tests

It's important to test blood and urine before your kidney donation. The team uses these results to make sure you're healthy enough to donate a kidney.

We'll collect blood and urine samples to look for kidney problems. We also check for low blood counts, diabetes, high cholesterol, and infections.

There are many Stanford laboratories between Redwood City and San Jose. There are also locations in the East Bay.

- On Stanford's campus
 - Boswell Lab:
 - 300 Pasteur Drive; Pavilion B, Level 1, H1120-G; Stanford, CA 94305
 - Phone: 650-724-4750
 - Monday to Friday, 6:00 am to 5:30 pm
 - Saturday, Sunday, and holidays 7:00 am to 3:30 pm
 - Blake Wilbur Building:
 - 900 Blake Wilbur Drive; 1st floor, Room W1083; Palo Alto, CA 94304
 - Phone: 650-724-4750
 - Monday to Friday, 7:00 am to 5:30 pm
 - Hoover Pavilion:
 - 211 Quarry Road, suite 101; Palo Alto, CA 94304
 - Phone: 650-724-4750
 - Monday to Friday, 7:00 am to 7:00 pm
- Menlo Park
 - Menlo Medical Clinic:
 - 321 Middlefield Road, Menlo Park, CA 94025

- Phone: 650-724-4750
Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 5:00 pm
- Menlo Medical Clinic:
1300 Crane Street, 1st Floor; Menlo Park, CA 94025
Phone: 650-724-4750
Monday to Friday, 7:00 am to 6:00 pm
 - Redwood City
Stanford Medicine Outpatient Center:
440 Broadway Street, Pavilion B, 1st Floor B11; Redwood City, California 94063 Phone:
650-724-4750
Monday to Friday, 7:00 am to 6:00 pm
 - Emeryville
Blood draw at Stanford Health Care, Emeryville:
5800 Hollis Street, 1st Floor, Pavilion B; Emeryville, CA 94608
Phone: 650-724-4750
Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 5:00 pm
 - Pleasanton
5565 W Las Positas Blvd, Pleasanton, CA 94588
Phone: 925-416-3600
Monday to Friday, 7:00 am to 5:30 pm
Saturday, 7:00 am to 1:00 pm
 - Livermore
1133 E. Stanley Blvd, Livermore, CA 94550
Phone: 925-416-3600
Monday to Friday, 7:00 am to 5:30 pm
Saturday, 7:00 am to 1:00 pm
 - San Jose
2577 Samaritan Drive, Suite 845, San Jose, CA 95124
Phone: 650-724-4750
Monday to Friday, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm

Visit this website for more information on Stanford blood draw sites:

[Stanford Health Care Blood Draw Sites](https://stanfordhealthcare.org/medical-clinics/blood-draw-sites.html)

<https://stanfordhealthcare.org/medical-clinics/blood-draw-sites.html>

If you cannot go to a Stanford lab, we can order the lab tests at either LabCorp or Quest. These large lab companies have many locations. There is usually a location close to your home.

Information on imaging

It's important to obtain images of your kidneys. The images let us see the blood vessels and size of your kidneys. That helps to make sure it's safe for you to donate one of them. The types of imaging you may have include:

- Computed tomography (CT): This is the best imaging method to show the size and shape of kidneys. Staff insert an IV tube to deliver contrast fluid that allows us to see your vessels. CT scans expose you to a small amount of radiation. Read more about the risks and benefits of CT scans on this U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) website:

[FDA CT](#)

<https://www.fda.gov/radiation-emitting-products/medical-x-ray-imaging/computed-tomography-ct>

- Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI): This method of imaging is like a CT scan. You will receive contrast fluid via an IV tube. MRIs take longer to perform but don't expose you to radiation. The quality of images is like a CT scan. Read more about MRIs on this FDA website:

[FDA MRI](#)

<https://www.fda.gov/radiation-emitting-products/medical-imaging/mri-magnetic-resonance-imaging>

- Nuclear medicine kidney scan: This test is used to check how well your kidneys work. Staff will give you tracer fluids intravenously that will leave your body when you urinate. A special camera will then measure how much of the tracer fluid remains in your body. Read more about nuclear medicine scans on this Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website:

[CDC Nuclear Medicine](#)

https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/radiation/nuclear_medicine.htm

- X-ray: You will have a chest X-ray. This will screen for any heart or lung issues. X-rays expose one part of your body to a small amount of radiation. Read more about the risks and benefits of X-rays on this CDC website:

[CDC X-ray](#)

<https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/radiation/x-rays.html>

All donors have a chest X-ray and a CT scan. Other studies are performed as needed.

Heart (cardiac) testing

It's important to make sure your heart is in good shape before the kidney donor surgery. We want to minimize any potential risks as much as possible.

- Electrocardiogram (EKG) screening: All donors have an EKG screening. This fast, painless test shows the electrical activity in your heart. It can detect some heart conditions.
- People who are over 50 years old and those with other risks for heart disease will also get a heart stress test. During a stress test, you will walk and run on a treadmill before and after an ultrasound test of the heart.

Support from living donor advocate and others

You will meet with the independent living donor advocate (ILDA) and a social worker. They will make sure you understand the process and are ready to be a donor. The ILDA works with donors apart from the rest of the medical team. They promote your best interests as a potential living donor. They advocate for your rights.

The ILDA helps you understand information about giving consent to be a kidney donor. They help you with the before-surgery evaluation and the surgery itself. They also remind you about important follow-up after the kidney donation.

You will also meet with a social worker. They check your emotional well-being to make sure you're ready to be a donor. They'll talk to you about emotional, financial, and physical issues connected with kidney donation.

Additional psychosocial check

Donors may be asked to meet with a transplant psychiatrist before donating a kidney. The one-time visit is done to ensure you are mentally prepared for kidney donation.

Medical evaluation

During the medical evaluation, you meet with a kidney transplant doctor. They will assess your health and discuss the benefits and risks of kidney donation.

This visit will include a review of your medical history and a focused physical exam. Your doctor will also review your laboratory and imaging results.

You may discuss any questions you have about your health before and after a kidney donation.

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