

# Organ Transplant Center Patient Selection

The multidisciplinary transplant committee (physicians, social workers, nurses, pharmacists, dietitians, financial counselors) uses these reasons to decide if a patient can get a kidney transplant. These reasons guide the committee, but the decisions are individualized to the patient.

## Indications (reasons) for Kidney Transplantation

1. Stage 4 or 5 chronic kidney disease (CKD). This means the kidneys are damaged and cannot filter blood as they should. Waste then builds up in the body. The stages of chronic kidney disease are based on blood tests called creatinine clearance or estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR). We often list patients with an eGFR less than 20. These patients may be on dialysis.
2. If a patient's kidney is not working and making them very sick (nausea, loss of appetite, trouble sleeping, feeling tired), we might consider them even if their eGFR is higher.

## Reasons a patient may not qualify:

1. Bad heart disease, such as when the heart cannot pump enough blood to meet the body's needs, plaque buildup that can reduce blood flow where a kidney would be put, or chest pain. Sometimes heart disease can get better with treatment.
2. Bad diseases of the lungs that can make breathing harder, like high blood pressure in the arteries that go to your lungs, asthma, or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
3. Advanced liver disease found by a biopsy (a small piece of tissue taken from the liver and tested) with high blood pressure in the liver vein.
4. Vascular diseases that narrow the arteries or veins and lessen blood flow to the arms, legs, heart, or brain.
5. Kidney disease that may come back in the transplanted kidney and cause the new kidney to not work.
6. Lots of scarring on the abdomen from past surgeries or radiation.
7. Patients who do not take their medicine as told, do not follow fluid or diet restrictions, or do not go to their appointments.
8. Patients with behavioral or mental health issues that may make it hard to care for a transplant.
9. Patient does not have enough insurance coverage for transplant and after care costs. We will try to help patients get coverage.
10. Patients cannot pay for the resources or medicines needed after transplant. We will try to help patients find resources.
11. Patient does not have caregivers that can help with follow-up care and taking medicines.
12. High body mass index (BMI) based on height, weight, and body shape.
13. Patient cannot move around their home or do daily activities (making food, using the bathroom). This can make it hard to recover after surgery.
14. Patients that were evaluated in the past and did not follow the needed steps.

15. Patients with certain medical conditions that may not be able to wait for a deceased donor transplant may be asked to find a living donor for transplant.

**Reasons a patient cannot be listed:**

1. Serious active infection, like wound, blood, or lung infections.
2. Active cancer
3. Harmful use of alcohol or non-prescription drugs
4. Using alcohol or illicit drugs and not following recommended treatment
5. Not taking medicines as told, not following diet or fluid restrictions, not going to dialysis treatments or leaving treatment early, or not doing needed health care items
6. Unstable mental health
7. There is no place to connect the new kidney due to blood vessel issues or past surgeries.
8. Untreated human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). The virus is still active.
9. Patients with certain medical conditions that cannot wait for a deceased donor transplant and must find a living donor for transplant.

After a decision is made about if a patient can get a kidney transplant, their transplant nurse coordinator will let them know the decision over the phone. The decision will also be sent to the patient, their referring nephrologist (kidney doctor), and their dialysis unit in a letter.