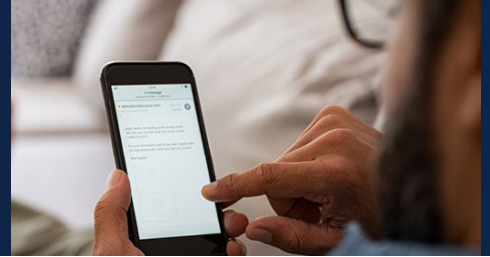


Living Kidney Donor Program

Finding a Donor on Social Media



How do you share your search for a living kidney donor on Social Media?

Finding a living donor will increase your chances of receiving a transplant. It is important that others know you need a kidney, as research shows 25% of people would donate a kidney if they knew someone that needs one. So it is in your best interest to create your story, share widely and stay positive!

If they do not know, they cannot donate. If you do not tell your friends and family that you need a kidney, they will never know. And if they do not know, they cannot help. Make it personal, tell YOUR story (what is treatment like, how do you feel).

Use information from **kidney.org** to include facts on kidney disease, living donation, and transplant. For example did you know a living donor doesn't have to be blood-related? Anybody over the age of 18 that is healthy can be a donor. All potential donors undergo extensive testing in order to be approved.

Social media allows you to quickly share your story with your entire network of friends and family. What's more, your social circle can share your story with their networks, allowing more people to hear about your need for a donor.

Here are tips to get your search started on social media.

Finding a living donor online may sound overwhelming when you're feeling the physical and emotional stress of kidney disease and dialysis. But sharing your story on social media is quicker and easier than you may think.

Popular social media channels include Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram. Each channel has its benefits, but Facebook may be your best option for quickly getting your message out to more people.

1. Create a page separate from your personal account. Include a photo with your social media post if possible.

It's important to maintain a boundary between your private life and your public search for a kidney, so consider creating a Facebook page that is separate from your personal profile. If you're not tech-savvy or the social media world seems intimidating, ask a family member, friend, or even someone at your transplant center to help you.

You should not mention your blood type. If a potential donor does not have a compatible blood type to you, we can place you and your donor in a paired kidney exchange program.

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2. Create a memorable name and hashtag for your page.

A unique name can help your story stay fresh in the minds of those who visit your page.

Using hashtags on your posts will allow other people searching for those hashtags to find your story, which can increase your visibility. You can come up with your own hashtags, but it's also a good idea to use popular terms associated with living donation, including:

#KidneyTransplant
#BeADonor
#LivingDonor
#DonateLife

Tagging organizations that you trust can also be a great way to get your message to those interested in being a living donor.

3. Tell your story.

Be honest about what you're going through and how people can help. You may want your story to include things like:

- Your personal journey to diagnosis
- How your disease has impacted your life
- Your family (and why they cannot donate)
- How long you've been on the waitlist
- Your transplant center's contact information

It can be hard to write about yourself, but it's important for people to relate to your story. One recent kidney-transplant asked for help from a friend to create a story that would resonate. Don't be afraid to reach out to others if you're struggling to find the right words!

4. Post photos and videos that educate others.

Some use the page as a platform to educate followers on the reality of renal failure. They include enough detail to help people understand their personal experience but are careful not to share photos or videos that may be too graphic. You can also post encouragement for others who are going through the same things.

Look at what you follow to see what kind of things will engage your followers and generate more views for your page. What are you most likely to respond to? Share those kinds of things.

5. Encourage friends and family to share.

Post 'likes' are great for boosting confidence, but what's more impactful is when people share your posts because that's how your story spreads to a wider audience.

"I have so much more to live for."

"I tell everybody to please share my page and posts. And if you're not tech-savvy, find someone who is so they can show you how to click the share button."

6. Share carefully and legally.

Remember that it is illegal to exchange money, services, or goods in exchange for a donated organ.

You'll want to provide a way for interested living donors to get in touch with you, but you may not want strangers to reach you 24/7 on your cell phone.

Some people use a landline number, checking periodically for messages. This way, there is no worry about receiving calls at midnight and it protects privacy. Another option is to use technology like GoogleVoice to set up a number that can forward calls wherever you'd like them to go.

You may find a living donor right away—or it may take a lot of time and effort. It's normal to feel discouraged but stay positive and keep trying. It only takes one donor to get a transplant!

Support groups can help you stay motivated during your search. Whether you join a support group online or in person, you'll find people who will understand what you're going through and can offer advice.

Transplant social workers are available to help you.

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