

TALKING ABOUT TRANSPLANTATION

# *I have a living donor who doesn't match, what can I do?*

*OPTN Kidney Paired Donation Pilot Program*



UNITED NETWORK FOR ORGAN SHARING

UNOS™

*“Being part of a KPD transplant allowed me to help my husband live a normal life. I was also able to help another family live a normal life.”*

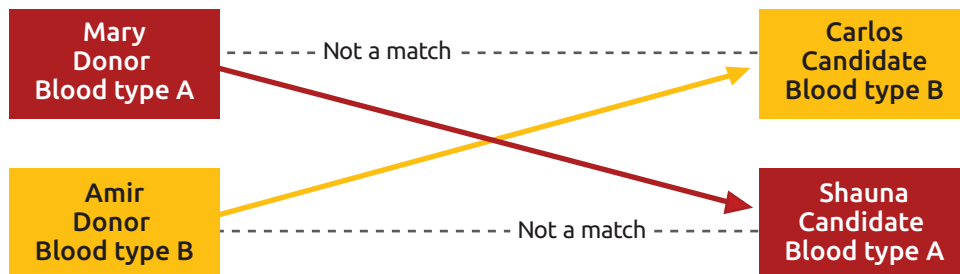
*—Paired Exchange Donor*

United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) is a non-profit, charitable organization that serves as the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (OPTN) under contract with the federal government. The OPTN helps create and define organ allocation and distribution policies that make the best use of donated organs. This process involves continuously evaluating new advances and discoveries so policies can be adapted to best serve patients waiting for transplants. All transplant programs and organ procurement organizations throughout the country are OPTN members and are obligated to follow the policies the OPTN creates for allocating organs.

Many thanks to New England Organ Bank for sharing the information and illustrations in this brochure.



Mary wants to donate a kidney to Carlos, but they do not match. Amir wants to donate to Shauna, but they do not match. Mary is a match for Shauna, and Amir matches Carlos. Switching donors and recipients in this case allows both transplants to happen. This type of transplant is called kidney paired donation or KPD. KPD transplants can involve two or more recipient/donor pairs, resulting in more lives saved.



## What is the OPTN Kidney Paired Donation Pilot Program (KPDPP)?

The KPDPP matches donors and candidates with other pairs who do not match. Your transplant team enters your medical information into a national database, managed by the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (OPTN). We match pairs twice a week, then we work with hospitals to plan the transplants.

## Who can join?

### *Transplant Candidates*

If you need a kidney transplant, are receiving care at a U.S. transplant hospital, and are on the national organ transplant waiting list, you can join. You do not have to be on dialysis. You must have a living donor who is willing to donate a kidney, but the donor does not have to be your same blood type.

### *Donors*

You must be at least 18 years old. You must be willing to take part in a KPD transplant. All donors must complete medical and psychological testing before they can donate.

People who wish to donate a kidney to someone they don't know are called non-directed, altruistic or Good Samaritan donors. These donors enter the KPDPP alone, not as part of a pair. They may allow several transplants to happen.

## What are the benefits of joining the KPDPP?

### *Candidates*

- You could receive a living donor transplant.
- You may spend less time on dialysis.
- You may receive a transplant before starting dialysis.
- You may not have to wait as long for a transplant.

### *Donors*

- Your loved one may receive a living donor kidney transplant.
- Your donation can help other patients and their families.

As with any surgery, kidney donation and transplant involve risks. Discuss these risks with your transplant team.

## Is there a fee to join the OPTN KPDPP?

No, there is no cost to you to join. Discuss the costs of donation and transplant with your transplant team.

## What happens when a match is found?

The transplant team will contact transplant candidates and donors. Tests are arranged to confirm a good match.

## Where would the transplant take place?

### ***Candidates***

The transplant will take place at the hospital where you currently receive care. You can choose to travel to your matched donor's hospital, if they are unable to travel and their kidney cannot be shipped.

### ***Donors***

There are two options.

- 1) You can have your surgery at the hospital who entered you into the KPDPP. Your kidney will be shipped to your matched candidate.
- 2) You could travel to your matched candidate's hospital for surgery.

## What will happen to my status on the deceased donor waiting list?

### ***Candidates***

If you join the OPTN KPDPP, you will remain on the list and you will continue to receive deceased donor kidney offers. Participation does not affect your wait-time or status on the deceased donor list.

## Can donors and recipients meet?

Yes, after surgery, donors and recipients can meet or connect with each other. Both the donor and the recipient must agree. Your transplant team can explain the rules.

## How do I get started?

Contact your transplant team to ask about the KPDPP.

Learn more about living donation and transplantation:

- United Network for Organ Sharing: [www.unos.org](http://www.unos.org)
- UNOS Patient Services Line: 888.894.6361
- Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network: <http://optn.transplant.hrsa.gov>
- National Living Donor Assistance Center (NLDAC): [www.livingdonorassistance.org](http://www.livingdonorassistance.org); 888.870.5002
- National Kidney Foundation: [www.kidney.org](http://www.kidney.org)
- Organ donation: [www.organdonor.gov](http://www.organdonor.gov)

*Our mission is to unite and strengthen the donation  
and transplant community to save lives.*

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UNITED NETWORK FOR ORGAN SHARING

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