Waiting for a Kidney Transplant

Once you have completed the transplant evaluation and are listed for a kidney transplant, the waiting begins. Wait times for a kidney transplant may be as long as five to seven years, depending on your blood type and other specifics.

It is important to take care of yourself during the time you are waiting for a kidney offer. Kidney disease and dialysis can be very physically demanding and may take a toll on the human body. Many complications and progressive physical problems associated with kidney disease can be lessened with proper management.

Proper Diet

The food and fluids you select can make a profound effect on your health, especially when you are on dialysis. You may be asked to decrease your fluid intake, and change the amount and types of food you eat (especially those high in potassium and phosphorous). Working with your dietitian and health care team to plan a diet that meets your needs may help you control such complications as heart failure and bone disease.

Adequate Dialysis

The amount of time you need to dialyze depends on a number of factors including your size, how well your vascular access works, and to some extent, your diet and activity level. Your physician, along with your health care team will help you establish a goal for dialysis adequacy. Inadequate dialysis is strongly associated with premature death as well as other potential complications.

Medications

In addition to diet and dialysis, medications also play a roll in managing your kidney failure. Medications assist in the management of bone disease, low blood count, and high blood pressure.

Physical Condition

It is also important to stay fit. This means a healthy weight and exercise. Talk with your health care team to help you determine an individualized plan.

Other Health Care Concerns

Many persons with kidney failure also have other illnesses which may have been the cause of or caused the kidney failure. Illness such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and/or heart disease can have a serious impact on your health.

Talk with your health care team to be certain all aspects of your health are being monitored and treated as indicated. Many of the long-term health complications associated with kidney disease are permanent. Staying as healthy as possible during the waiting time may allow you to enjoy all the benefits of the kidney transplant you have waited for.
It’s important to recognize those who are celebrating transplant milestones, so we want to acknowledge recipients with anniversaries. During this quarter, three recipients are celebrating their first anniversary! We also have three recipients celebrating their 5-year anniversaries, two each celebrating 15-year and 22-year anniversaries, and one recipient each celebrating 16-year and 18-year anniversaries. Due to privacy restrictions, names cannot be listed without written consent. However, please contact Rachel at 423-778-6675 if you would like for your name to be listed in the future.

Meet Our Physicians

Dr. Ralph Stafford is a transplantation-trained nephrologist who joined the physician team in 2005. Board-certified in Internal Medicine and Nephrology, Dr. Stafford is a Clinical Instructor of Internal Medicine at UT College of Medicine Chattanooga at Erlanger. Dr. Stafford attended the St. Bartholomew & Royal London School of Medicine in London, completed his residency at UT College of Medicine Chattanooga at Erlanger, and completed his Nephrology fellowship at the UT College of Medicine Memphis.

Dr. Michael Roe is a general surgeon who performed Erlanger’s first hand-assisted, laparoscopic living donor nephrectomy in 2004. Board certified through the American Board of Surgery and a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, he specializes in endocrine and laparoscopic surgery. He is an Associate Professor for the Department of Surgery at the UT College of Medicine Chattanooga at Erlanger. Dr. Roe attended medical school at Wake Forest University and completed his General Surgery residency at the UT College of Medicine Chattanooga at Erlanger. He did additional fellowship training at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN.

Dr. Philip Smith is a general surgeon who also specializes in surgical critical care. Board certified through the American Board of Surgery and a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, Dr. Smith has served on the physician transplant team for over 5 years. He is an Assistant Professor for the Department of Surgery at the UT College of Medicine Chattanooga at Erlanger. Dr. Smith completed a fellowship in Surgical Critical Care at Vanderbilt University and honorably served as a United States Navy Lieutenant Flight Surgeon in Quantico, VA.

Happy Anniversary!

Congratulations to:
* Dimas Ramirez of Dalton, GA
* Thomas McGahee of Chattanooga

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FACEBOOK PARTNERS WITH DONATE LIFE

During Donor Awareness Month in April, Facebook partnered with Donate Life America to dramatically increase the number of registered organ donors. Too many times families are faced with making a decision about organ donation, but aren’t sure how their loved one felt about this end of life decision. Social networking through Facebook allows people to share their decisions with friends and family.