

# Chapter 1: Introduction to Transplant and Evaluation

This booklet gives you basic information about a kidney transplant. You will be working closely with the members of your health care team to decide if a kidney transplant is right for you.

## Your Transplant Team

You will work with a team of health care providers before, during and after your transplant.

- Transplant coordinator**  
The transplant coordinator is a nurse who has received specialized training in kidney transplant evaluation and post-transplant care.
- Transplant surgeon**  
The transplant surgeon will review the benefits and risk of the surgical process and will also be the doctor performing the transplant surgery.
- Nephrologist**  
This is a doctor who specializes in treating people who have kidney disease and who have had transplants. The nephrologist will monitor transplant function and medications after transplant.
- Social worker**  
The social worker will work with you and your family to help identify any needs you have, offer support, and give you information about resources in your community.
- Financial specialist**  
The financial specialist will help you with your questions about insurance and billing. You are encouraged to call your insurance provider so you know your benefits.
- Dietitian**  
The dietitian will answer your questions about what to expect with your post-transplant diet.
- Nurses**  
They will provide inpatient care, education and support after the transplant.
- Pharmacist**  
The pharmacist will answer your questions about medications. This includes prescription, over-the-counter, vitamins, herbal, and natural medications.

# Transplant Coordinator

The transplant coordinator is your main contact with the transplant team. You will work closely with your coordinator during your evaluation and while you are waiting for a kidney. Please tell your coordinator if:

- your phone number(s) change
- your address changes
- you have changes in your medications
- you start dialysis, change dialysis centers or change your type of dialysis
- you have health changes (new problem or problem that gets worse)
- you are in the hospital or had a recent hospital stay
- you are scheduled for a surgery or procedure
- your insurance changes or you need to talk with the financial specialist
- you have questions about the transplant
- you had routine screens updated
- you will be out of town and how to contact you.

**Good communication with your transplant coordinator is important to help make your evaluation go as smoothly as possible.**

# Your Role in the Evaluation and Transplant

You are an important member of your health care team and to the success of your evaluation and transplant. There are many things you can do to help make the evaluation process go smoothly:

- keep in close contact with your transplant coordinator during your evaluation
- stay up-to-date on routine screens and vaccinations
- update your coordinator with any changes.

While you are waiting on the transplant list:

- contact your coordinator with updates on your health status
- keep routine tests and vaccinations up to date
- report changes in your insurance or contact information to the financial supervisor or transplant social worker
- see your doctors as recommended
- go to dialysis as scheduled
- follow your diet and fluid restrictions as directed by your nephrologist
- do your best to stay healthy so you are ready when a kidney becomes available.

After transplant:

- Check and write down your blood pressure, weight, temperature and blood glucose (if needed) as directed.
- Go to all clinic appointments.
- Follow directions for how to take your medications.
- Have lab draws frequently.
- You will be encouraged to live a healthy lifestyle, such as eating well and exercising.