



Live Kidney Donation: Medical Toolkit

CHAPTER • 3

Kidney donation for people with obesity

Will I be able to donate if I have obesity?

Each transplant center has its own rules about who can donate. During your evaluation, your doctor will measure your BMI to see if you have obesity and let you know if you're able to donate.

You may **not** be able to donate if:

- You have a high BMI. Cut-offs vary between transplant programs.
- You've had weight loss surgery, such as gastric bypass or a gastric sleeve

If you have obesity and heart-related problems, such as high cholesterol and high blood pressure, doctors will test your heart health. If your doctors think your heart is not healthy enough to donate, they won't let you donate. See Chapter 1 about high blood pressure for more information.

What effects can obesity have on kidney donors?

In kidney donors, obesity can cause:

- More problems during surgery
- Type 2 diabetes, which can cause kidney disease
- Other types of kidney disease

Doctors may ask you to make changes to lose weight after donating. This helps prevent diabetes and kidney disease. If you make changes to lose weight, you'll need to keep doing them for the rest of your life.

For basic information about obesity and how it can impact your kidney health, please go to: <https://www.kidney.org/atoz/content/obesewyska>

What is obesity?

Obesity is when a person is very overweight.

What is BMI?

Doctors use a measure called BMI (Body Mass Index) to decide if a person has obesity. BMI compares how much you weigh to how tall you are. Your doctor can help you figure out your BMI. A BMI:

- Between 25-29 is overweight
- Over 30 is obesity

References

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Note: This information is the opinion of the Living Donor Community of Practice (LDCOP) of the American Society of Transplantation. The LDCOP is a group of health care professionals and researchers who specialize in living kidney donation. The LDCOP's recommendations are meant to offer you helpful information, but you may find opinions from other groups or organizations that are helpful to you, too.