

# Glossary of common transplant terms

## A

**Allograft:** Tissue or an organ that is transplanted from one person to another.

**Antigen:** A molecule, often a protein, that can cause an immune response from your immune system.

**AV fistula:** When an artery and a vein are connected. This can be done through surgery for hemodialysis.

## B

**BK virus:** A virus that can affect kidney transplant recipients.

**Brain death:** When a person no longer has any brain function to keep them alive.

## C

**Chronic kidney disease (CKD):** When your kidneys have permanent damage or do not work as well as they should that continues for 3 months or longer.

**CMV (Cytomegalovirus):** A virus similar to the viruses that cause chicken pox and mononucleosis. Transplant recipients have a higher chance of a CMV infection.

**Creatinine:** A waste product that your kidneys filter out of your blood. Some creatinine in the blood is normal, but too much can be a sign that there is a problem with your kidneys.

**CT scan (Computed Tomography scan):** An imaging scan that uses X-rays to take detailed pictures of the inside of your body.

## D

**DBD Donor (Deceased after brain death donor):** A deceased donor who has been declared dead through brain testing.

**DCD Donor (Deceased after circulatory death donor):** A deceased donor whose heart has stopped beating.

**Deceased donor:** A person who donates an organ after their death (as opposed to a living donor, who donates an organ while they are alive).

**Delayed graft function (DGF):** The need for dialysis within 7 days of a kidney transplant.

**Dialysis:** A type of treatment in which a machine removes extra fluid, electrolytes, and waste products from your blood when your kidneys cannot.

## E

**End-stage kidney disease (ESKD/ESRD; also called kidney failure):** When your kidneys can no longer work well enough to filter your blood due to chronic kidney disease. With ESKD, you need dialysis or a kidney transplant to do the job your kidneys cannot.

**EBV (Epstein-Barr Virus):** A very common virus that can lead to mononucleosis (a virus).

## G

**Glomerular filtration rate (GFR):** A measure of how well your kidneys are working. The normal range of GFR is 90-120 mL/min/1.73 m<sup>2</sup>. Your doctor may talk to you about percent of kidney function instead, since people are more familiar with percent than GFR. Measuring GFR is inconvenient, so you will usually see an estimated GFR (eGFR) that can be measured from a simple blood test.

**Glomerulonephritis (GN):** Kidney diseases caused by inflammation that damages the filters of the kidney, called the glomeruli.

**Graft survival:** How long a kidney transplant lasts.

## H

**Haplotype:** A group of genes inherited (passed down) together from a single parent.

**Hematuria:** Blood in your urine (pee).

**Hemodialysis (HD):** A type of dialysis using a machine and a special filter to clean your blood and remove excess fluid. It is often done 3 times a week. People can get this at a dialysis center or in their own home (home hemodialysis).

**HLA (Human Leukocyte Antigens):** The main proteins that the immune system may react to after a kidney transplant, which may cause it to reject the new kidney. HLAs help your body tell the difference between you and a foreign substance.

**Hypertension (or high blood pressure):** A blood pressure that is higher than normal. This is usually when the top number is consistently higher than 130.

## K

**KDPI (Kidney Donor Profile Index):** A score that measures the quality of a donor kidney. It ranges from 0 to 100. A lower score means the kidney is expected to work well for a longer time. A higher score means the kidney is expected to work well for a shorter time.

**Kidney transplant:** A surgery in which a healthy kidney from a living or recently deceased donor is placed into a person who has advanced chronic kidney disease or end-stage kidney disease.

## M

**Matching:** The process of finding out how closely a donor and recipient's HLAs match (Human Leukocyte Antigens, which are proteins). The more similar the HLAs are, the more likely the transplant will succeed.

**Microalbumin:** Very small amounts of a normal protein called albumin. When it is found in your urine, it may be a very early sign of kidney disease.

**MRI scan (Magnetic Resonance Imaging scan):** A type of imaging scan that uses strong magnets and radio waves to take detailed pictures of the inside of your body.

## N

**Nephrectomy:** A surgery to remove a kidney or kidney transplant.

## O

**Organ Procurement Organization (OPO):** Not-for-profit organizations responsible for recovering organs from deceased donors for transplants in the U.S.

**Organ Procurement Transplantation Network (OPTN):** A public-private partnership that links all professionals involved in the U.S. organ donation and transplant system.

## P

**Panel Reactive Antibody (PRA):** A measure of what proportion of the donor population a person with ESKD may have antibodies against. People with a higher PRA may have a harder time finding a donor and a higher chance of rejecting the transplanted kidney.

**Peritoneal dialysis (PD):** A type of dialysis that uses the lining of your abdomen, called the peritoneum, to filter blood inside your body. This can be done in this hospital or sometimes at home.

**Primary Non-Function (PNF):** When a kidney transplant never works the way it should.

**Proteinuria:** A high amount of protein in your urine. It may be a sign of kidney disease.

**Pyelonephritis:** A kidney infection.

## R

**Rejection:** When a transplant recipient's immune system attacks the transplanted organ or tissue.

## S

**Stages of CKD:** There are 5 stages of kidney disease, which are based on GFR test results. Stage 1 is mild kidney disease and stage 5 is severe chronic kidney disease.

## T

**Tissue typing:** A way to figure out the antigens (proteins) of a specific patient to help match them to a donor kidney.

## U

**United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS):** A non-profit organization that manages the U.S. Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (OPTN).

**Uremia:** A condition in people with advanced CKD where there is a build-up of waste products. Symptoms include fatigue, confusion, nausea, throwing up, and a metallic taste in the mouth.

**Urinalysis (UA):** A test that looks for abnormal amounts of blood, protein, glucose, and other substances in your urine.

## W

**Waitlisted/Listed Active:** When you are on the kidney transplant waiting list and able to get a kidney transplant.

**Waitlisted/Listed Inactive/On Hold:** When you are on the kidney transplant waiting list but are not able to get a kidney transplant. This is usually due to an illness or insurance issues.

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