



MEDIA KIT · FACT SHEET

THEY GAVE A KIDNEY TO SOMEONE THEY'D NEVER MET. ASK THEM WHY.

Every pitch includes a living donor and a local patient searching for a donor, so you can tell both sides of the story.

THE PROBLEM

More than 85,000 people in the U.S. are waiting for a kidney transplant (OPTN, January 2026). A living donor is often a patient's best option. But asking friends, coworkers, or a congregation to consider giving a kidney is one of the hardest asks a person can make, so most patients never make it.

WHO WE ARE

Next Step Next One is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit working to shorten the kidney transplant waitlist. We inspire living kidney donation through storytelling, education, and community.

WHAT WE DO: A KIDNEY CONVO

A free, 90-minute virtual event with short films, live stories from living donors and recipients, and open Q&A. It's led by donors and recipients, not clinicians. Guests don't need their camera or mic on. Nobody is asked to donate; they're invited to learn.

OUR STORY

- **2023:** Filmmaker Brian Tiell documents 17 living kidney donors climbing volcanoes in Guatemala.
- **October 2024:** Next Step Next One launches, reaching 1.5 million+ people and completing 100+ interviews in year one.
- **June 2025:** The first A Kidney Convo is held.
- **Now:** We hold 2–3 Kidney Convo's a month. Our Donor Search Roadmap program helps patients use A Kidney Convo to educate their own networks.

COME LEARN

Upcoming Kidney Convo's: <https://link.nextstepnextone.org/0xbeap>

LIVING DONATION QUICK FACTS

By the numbers	Find your local number
85,000+ people in the U.S. are waiting for a kidney transplant (OPTN, January 2026).	State waitlist numbers: optn.transplant.hrsa.gov → Data → State Data.

01 • WOULD I QUALIFY TO DONATE?

Most healthy adults 18 and older can be evaluated. Age limits vary by transplant center. The evaluation is thorough by design, and centers won't approve a donation if there's any concern about your long-term health. Your health comes first, always.

02 • WHAT DOES THE SURGERY INVOLVE?

It's usually laparoscopic (minimally invasive). Most donors go home in 2–3 days and are back to normal activity in about 6 weeks. Donation is considered very safe, and donors are evaluated extensively before any decision is made.

03 • WILL DONATING AFFECT MY LONG-TERM HEALTH?

Living donors have a life expectancy similar to the general population. The remaining kidney adapts and takes on the full workload. The lifetime risk of kidney failure is slightly higher than for comparable non-donors but remains low, which is why screening is careful. Donors through the National Kidney Registry also get priority for a kidney if they ever need one.

04 • DO I NEED TO KNOW SOMEONE WHO NEEDS A KIDNEY?

No. You can donate to a stranger and be matched with the recipient who fits best, sometimes starting a chain that saves several lives. You also don't have to be a match for someone you love: through paired donation, your kidney goes to a compatible stranger and your loved one receives a compatible kidney in return. Non-directed donors through the National Kidney Registry can name up to five family members to receive vouchers. One voucher can be redeemed if a family member ever needs a kidney.

05 • WILL IT COST ME ANYTHING?

Your evaluation and surgery are billed to the recipient's insurance, not yours. Through the National Kidney Registry's Donor Shield, donors can receive up to \$2,000 a week in lost wages for up to 12 weeks, and up to \$6,000 for travel, lodging, and dependent care.

STORY IDEAS

1. **Why would someone give a kidney to a stranger?** A local donor who didn't know their recipient.
2. **"I'm not asking for a kidney. I'm asking you to come learn."** How a local patient is building their search around an invitation, not an ask.
3. **You don't have to be a match.** How paired donation lets someone help a loved one even when they aren't a match, by giving to a stranger.
4. **Life after donation.** A donor who's back to running, coaching, or chasing their kids.

ABOUT NEXT STEP NEXT ONE

Next Step Next One is a Colorado-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit working to shorten the kidney transplant waitlist by inspiring living kidney donation through storytelling, education, and community. Its signature program, A Kidney Convo, is a free, 90-minute virtual event where real donors and recipients share their stories. Learn more at nextstepnextone.org.

BRIAN TIELL, CO-FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A Director of Photography and storyteller with 40 years of experience. In 2023, Brian filmed 17 Kidney Donor Athletes climbing volcanoes in Guatemala and came home convinced donors are "ordinary people who made an extraordinary choice." He has since interviewed more than 100 donors, recipients, and advocates, and co-created A Kidney Convo.

ABBEY COLLINS, MPH, CO-FOUNDER & PROGRAM/MARKETING DIRECTOR

A public health strategist and educator with a decade of experience turning complex health issues into education that moves people to act. Before building anything, Abbey surveyed 125+ living donors about what moved them to say yes. Their answers shaped A Kidney Convo.

MYTH VS. FACT

Myth	Fact
You have to be a family member or a match.	Strangers can donate, and paired donation means you don't have to match the person you want to help.
Donating will cost me a lot.	Your evaluation and surgery are billed to the recipient's insurance. Programs like Donor Shield cover lost wages and travel.
You can't live a normal life with one kidney.	Your remaining kidney takes on the full workload. Donors run marathons, raise families, and climb volcanoes.
If I go to an event or get tested, I'm committed.	Learning commits you to nothing. Even after testing, a donor can step back at any time, confidentially.
Patients can just wait for a deceased donor.	The wait is often years, and kidneys from living donors typically last longer.

LANGUAGE GUIDE

Say	Avoid
living donor, living kidney donor	“harvest,” “organ harvesting”
deceased donor	“cadaver”
person waiting for a kidney	“dying patient,” “victim”
Donor Shield covers donors’ costs	anything implying donors are paid

- Never imply organs can be bought or sold.
- Link to the patient’s microsite. Never print a patient’s or donor’s phone, email, or address.
- Include the A Kidney Convo link: <https://link.nextstepnextone.org/0xbeap>
- Use donors’ first names only, as agreed. Name a recipient only with their consent.

MEDIA CONTACT

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USAGE

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