



You can save a life as a living organ donor

A step-by-step living donor guide



VCUHealth™

Hume-Lee
Transplant Center

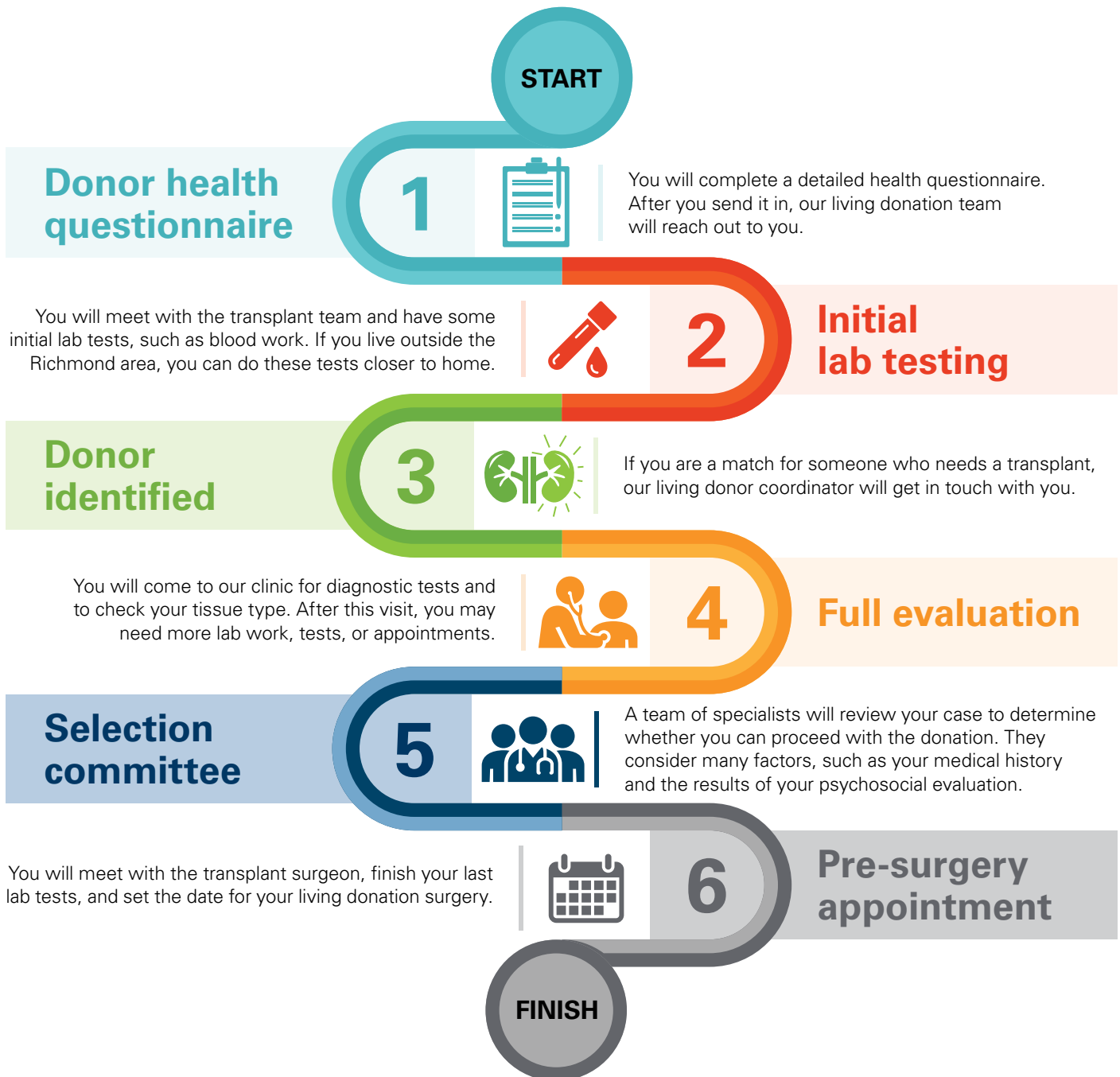
vcuhealth.org/livingdonors

If someone you care about needs a kidney or liver transplant, or if you want to help save a life, you could think about becoming a living organ donor.



The living organ donation process

We will be with you at every step, from your first evaluation through recovery and planning for what comes next. We are here to give you the information, support, and reassurance you need.



Making an informed decision

Donating an organ is a big decision, and many people make this choice each year. It's important to consider how it might affect you and your family.

Social impact

Choosing to become a living donor is a personal decision that deserves careful thought. It helps to talk with your friends and family so you have a strong support system.

Financial impact

You should also think about the financial impact of becoming a living donor. Most costs for organ donation, like lab work, x-rays, and doctor or hospital charges, are covered

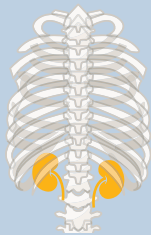
by the recipient's insurance. As a donor, you will need to pay for lost wages from time off work, travel to and from the hospital, and follow-up care. Our transplant and financial coordinators can help you find extra financial support.

Physical impact

All surgeries have some risks. Our transplant team is experienced with complex cases, which helps lower the risk of complications during transplant surgery.

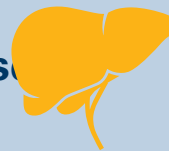
For most people, becoming a living organ donor does not lower life expectancy or cause long-term health risks. To see if you can donate, our transplant team will review your health history, current health status, and other aspects of the living donor process.

Did you know?



Almost everyone is born with **two kidneys**, which are located underneath the protective cage of the ribs.

The liver can regenerate itself



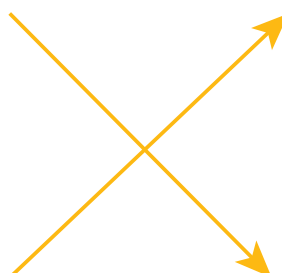
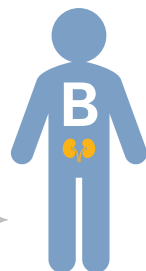
If it is damaged, or a portion is surgically removed, it will grow back to normal size and function within a few weeks.

Living donor paired exchange program

Potential living donors



Potential recipients



Your donation recipient

If you are not a match for your loved one, you may still be able to donate your organ to someone else in need through our living donor paired exchange program. Our experts help find an unrelated match for your kidney and your loved one, so two people receive organs from two living donors.

We also coordinate kidney exchange chains. In these, one generous living donor starts a series of transplants between donor and recipient pairs, either at Hume-Lee or with other transplant centers across the country.

Other options for living liver donation

We offer ABO-incompatible living donor liver transplants, so some patients can receive lifesaving care even when blood types do not match.

About us

We believe in the life-saving power of living donation. VCU Health has a long history of successful adult and pediatric living donor kidney and liver transplants. Both procedures offer significant benefits to recipients:

- Reduce wait times for transplantation
- Offer immediate transplantation of a healthy, functioning organ
- Decrease rejection risks if receiving an organ donated by a genetic-match relative

Our dedicated team continues to find and adopt new technologies to improve patient outcomes. We are one of the nation's leading transplant programs, pioneering innovation in living donation and robotic surgery. Our minimally invasive robotic methods use smaller incisions, which help patients recover faster.

We have achieved several firsts, including the first robotic-assisted kidney transplant on the East Coast, the first fully robotic living donor liver transplant in the U.S., and the world's first robotic living donor liver retrieval using da Vinci 5 technology.

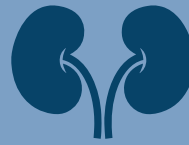
Your organ transplant team

Our transplant team works together to support you and make sure your donation is successful. For living donations, the donor and recipient each have their own treatment teams. The team members who may be involved in your care include:

- Nurse coordinator
- Social worker
- Independent living donor advocate
- Transplant surgeon and nurses
- Lab technicians
- Radiologists
- Financial coordinator
- Dietician
- Other specialists (i.e., endocrinologist, gastroenterologist, cardiologist)



Hume-Lee
Transplant Center



300+
Kidney
transplants
performed annually

40
Living kidney
donations
in 2025



175+
Liver
transplants
performed annually

26
Living liver
donations
in 2025

After your donation

Most living kidney donors stay in the hospital for about two to three days after surgery and need another two to four weeks to recover. Living liver donors usually stay in the hospital for four to seven days and need another four to six weeks to recover.

During recovery, you may feel some pain or discomfort. This can usually be managed with prescribed or over-the-counter pain medicine. Depending on your job, kidney donors may return to work as soon as two weeks after surgery, and living liver donors may return after four weeks. You will have follow-up appointments and tests to check your health.

Still have questions?

Our transplant team is here to answer questions about your transplant journey.

Call **804-828-2762** to speak with one of our team members.

Visit vcuhealth.org/livingdonors for more information.