

What if I decide not to be a living organ donor?

Living organ donation is voluntary. You are not obligated to become a living donor. Your transplant coordinator will frequently talk with you about this as you start your journey to learn about living donation, and as the evaluation tests continue. Likewise, during your medical evaluation, an independent living donor advocate will talk with you about your decision to donate. This person is available to help you walk away from the process if at any time living donation doesn't feel right to you.

People approach living donation in a variety of different ways. Some just know that it is right for them. Others struggle dealing with emotions related to competing obligations, concern, love, and/or fear. As time passes, it is not uncommon for feelings about this decision to change.

The donor evaluation process is designed to help you make a thoughtful, informed decision:

1. **Confidentiality.** Your medical record is private. This means that your intended recipient, and other members of your family, will not be told anything about the status of your donor evaluation. This also means that if you decide not to donate, the transplant team can help you do so in a private, safe way that protects relations with your recipient.
2. **Education.** The medical team will provide education about the risks and benefits of living donation. They will combine data about living donor outcomes with your health information and test results. Sometimes, by learning more, you can better sort through your feelings. In addition, if members of your family or support system have anxiety or concerns about you becoming a living donor, we invite them to join you at this session.
3. **Careful process.** There are several steps to the donor evaluation process. This helps the medical team make careful determinations, and allows you time to make a thoughtful decision.
4. **Donor advocate.** You will meet with someone who works with UW Health, but is not a member of the transplant team. She is there to talk with you about donation decision-making, to help you get all of your questions answered and can help you walk away from the process at any time.