

HISTORY

Erma Bombeck (1927 – 1996) was a nationally syndicated humor columnist for 30 years, author of twelve books, freelance writer, and a regular on “Good Morning America” for 11 years. Diagnosed with polycystic kidney disease in her 20’s, Erma was a board member of the Arizona Kidney Foundation from 1977 to 1980. In 1980, Erma and the AKF Women’s Board started the annual Authors Luncheon that has grown into one of the largest such events in the country.

Erma began peritoneal dialysis in 1993. She received a kidney transplant from a deceased donor on April 3, 1996 and died of ensuing medical complications 19 days later.

To honor her memory and foster her legacy, Erma’s family formed The Erma Bombeck Organ Donor Awareness Project to promote the benefits of organ donation. Now simply known as The Erma Bombeck Project, the focus remains on continuing awareness of organ donation registration, while educating the public about the option of living kidney donation.

LEARN MORE ABOUT LIVING KIDNEY DONATION

ERMABOMBECKPROJECT.ORG

AZKIDNEY.ORG

LIVINGDONORS.ORG

LIVINGDONORSONLINE.ORG

LIVINGDONORASSISTANCE.ORG

PAIREDDONATION.ORG

KIDNEYREGISTRY.ORG

TRANSPLANTLIVING.ORG

FACTS

- The average wait for a kidney transplant is **4 years**.
- Long delays can affect transplant **success**; worse, waiting patients’ health can deteriorate, disqualifying them from receiving a transplant.
- There were over **24,000** kidney transplants performed in 2021. Over **6,500** came from living donors
organdonor.gov/learn/organ-donation-statistics
- Today, more than **1,300** Arizonans are still waiting for a kidney.
OPTN Data as of 8/25/22

The Next Step is to Contact a
Transplant Center in Arizona

**Banner - University Medical Center
Phoenix Transplant Institute**
Phoenix, AZ
bannerhealth.com

Mayo Clinic Transplant Center
Scottsdale, AZ
mayoclinic.org/kidney-transplant

**Banner - University Medical Center
Tucson Solid Organ Transplant**
Tucson, AZ
bannerhealth.com

Phoenix Children’s Hospital
Phoenix, AZ
phoenixchildrens.org/centers-programs/kidney-transplant

Dignity Health - Kidney Transplant Center
Phoenix, AZ
dignityhealthlivingdonation.org

ErmaBombeckProject.org

 /ErmaBombeckProject



Save a life
It’s in you

Register Online
Become a Donor



Save a life
It’s in you

THE
Erma
BOMBECK
PROJECT

BECOME A KIDNEY DONOR

GIVE THE GIFT OF LIFE

Erma's Legacy of Hope

The life force of Erma was always optimism and hope. It sustained her throughout her family life and her career – and drove Erma in the later years when she was ill. She was convinced that out there, somewhere, were people so selfless and families so compassionate they would commit to the ultimate act of love – a gift of life.

Her words were, “The real heroes and heroines are the patients who are hanging tough and the donors who are faced with hard decisions and give humanity a good name. We are about preserving life. It is indeed a gift.”

The Erma Bombeck Project carries Erma's vision forward. While non-living donors are the mainstay for the majority of organ transplants, The Erma Bombeck Project's goal is to also raise awareness and increase the number of living donors.

It's a tall order to be sure. But so is the need. We urge you to register to be an organ donor, and share the message of living donation. Save a life. It's in you.



HOW CAN I DONATE MY KIDNEY? TWO WAYS TO DONATE

Non-Living Kidney Donation Register Today – Save a Life

A non-living kidney donor means that after you have passed away, a doctor can remove your kidneys for transplant purposes.

According to 2021 data from Donor Network of Arizona, there were over 200,000 Arizonans added to the DonateLifeAZ registry. Since 2018, there has been a 14% increase in organ donors in Arizona.

You can join the growing number of registered donors by visiting <https://register.donatelifiaz.org/register>

For more information about donation, visit dnaz.org/about-us/contact/ or call (602)241-5550

Living Kidney Donation – Share Your Spare

Kidneys are one of the few organs that can be transplanted from a living donor. More importantly, the transplant success rate for living donor kidneys is much higher than for non-living kidneys – 95% after two years. And the average life span of the kidney is 20 years.

Imagine how critical this is for the more than 1,300 men, women, and children in Arizona who desperately need life-saving kidney transplants.

The intrinsic value of being a living kidney donor cannot be over emphasized. Many living kidney donors consider their “giving while living” to be the most deeply meaningful deed they will pursue in their lifetimes.

Information You Should Know Before Becoming a Living Kidney Donor

A newly transplanted kidney begins removing toxins from the recipient's body within hours, with results that are immediate and profound. The recipient's recovery time is shortened, and many other health complications due to kidney failure are reversed or slowed. Their energy returns, and they no longer need to schedule life around a dialysis machine.

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a living donor you must be in good general health and free from serious health risks. Routine tests are performed to determine a potential living donor's physical and mental health, as well as compatibility with the transplant recipient.

For the donor, surgery is performed laparoscopically, which greatly shortens recuperation and lowers risk. Typically, the recipient's insurance covers the donor's medical costs for the procedure and related testing. If a living donor should ever need a kidney later in life, they will be given top priority.

The number of Living Kidney donations has increased by 200% over the past twenty years. To date, there have been over 180,000* living kidney donors who have given the Gift of Life. If you are considering becoming a living kidney donor, it's important to educate yourself about the donation process, required testing, financial considerations, risks and recovery.

What is Paired Kidney Donation?

Living donors do not need to be blood-related or even blood-type compatible. Paired donation is when one incompatible donor/recipient pair is matched with another donor/recipient pair facing the same incompatibility situation. Thus, the donor of the first pair gives to the recipient of the second pair and vice versa. This simple exchange concept has now expanded to multiple donor/recipient pairs and even more altruistic donors.

If you want to donate to a loved one but do not match, paired donation may be an option for you.

*As of August 2022 per OPTN <https://optn.transplant.hrsa.gov/data/view-data-reports/national-data/#>

“When my friend Roger said yes to donating a kidney to me, it changed my life!”

Matt Bombeck

Living Kidney Donation Recipient

“My wife Shari's gift of her kidney changed not one life but three – Shari's, my son's and my own.”

Andy Bombeck

Living Kidney Donation Recipient

“I gave a kidney thinking it would change someone else's life, and it did, but it changed mine even more. The experience was one of the most gratifying in my life and today, Jeff (my recipient) and Christy are part of my family. I would do it again in a minute.”

Karny Stefan

Living Kidney Donor