

# A coordinated initiative supports the amazing gift of a living kidney

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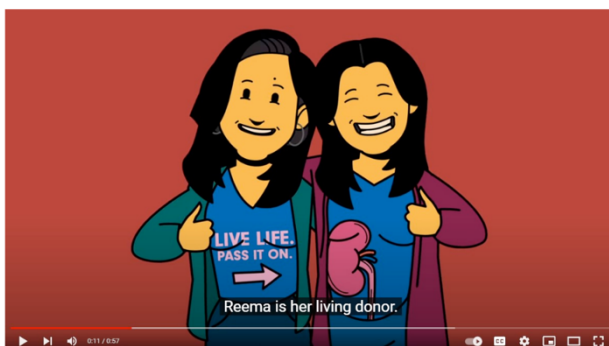
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**A kidney transplant that involves a live donor is a complex undertaking that has many moving parts.** One key indicator for success is how supported recipients and donors feel throughout their transplant journey.

Most people have two healthy kidneys, yet remarkably, we only need one healthy kidney to live well. Kidney patients facing life-threatening kidney failure have two choices of treatment that can extend their lives for years if not decades: dialysis or kidney transplant. Kidney transplants from live donors usually last longer than those from deceased donors, and compared to dialysis, can as much as triple a patient's life expectancy. Not all kidney patients are able to have a kidney transplant due to other health factors, but for the many who are able, receiving a kidney from a live donor is the best option.



When Binn Johal received a kidney from her sister Reema Garcha in 2018, both women were thankful their sisterly support was bolstered by the resources, advice and assistance they received from an initiative called Transplant First, which is now in its fourth year of operation.

Binn notes, "The Kidney Care Clinic was very helpful with pamphlets and a video and directed me to the BC Transplant website."

Reema adds, "The transplant team gave me all the information I wanted – they were great."



Transplant First project manager Sharon Gradin explains the goal of the initiative: "To standardize pre-transplant processes to ensure every kidney patient who is a potential transplant candidate is identified and supported during the transplant journey, including assistance in finding a living donor."

The journey Sharon talks about starts with staff at 15 Kidney Care Clinics that are run by the regional health authorities and are part of the BC Renal network. Clinic staff work with patients to educate them on the benefits of living donation, and along with BC

Transplant peers, provide the resources and support that Binn and Reema found so helpful.

"Patients want good care and the only way to get the best care is to ensure its coordinated." Sharon Gradin

### **Working together**

Just as the familial bond was important when Reema gave Binn a kidney, Transplant First team members also work in unison to ensure best possible transplant outcomes.

Sharon says, "By establishing roles and responsibilities and supporting better communication across settings and teams, there's clarity on where patients are at in the process and who is doing what at each specific point."

She also pays kudos to the initiative's "three amazing patient partners, who have helped shape this project and provided essential feedback along the way."

The Kidney Foundation of Canada also plays an important role with by reimbursing eligible donors for expenses like travel and accommodation that may occur as part of the donation process.

"The doctors, nurses and social workers were very informative and compassionate to me during this difficult time. I felt very safe in their hands." Binn Johal

### **Every transplant tells a story**

Each living kidney transplant participant is left with a remarkable experience. Visit BC Transplant's [Organ Donation & Transplant page](#) to read heart-warming stories of Reema, Binn and other donors and recipients.

### **Living kidney donation resources**

To access resources for potential donors, recipients and staff, see [Transplant First resources](#).

Also, be sure to [check out this new short animation](#) about Reema and Binn's real life experience.