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Kidney Transplant Get-Togethers May Increase Donations

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This article is part of our ongoing coverage of Renal Week 2009. Click here for [a complete list of our Renal Week Live articles](#).

Key Points

- A kidney disease patient's family and friends may increase their willingness to consider donation after get-togethers.
- The findings suggest that group education of patients' relatives and friends may help alleviate the organ shortage and increase the number of living donations.
- In all 10 groups that participated in these discussions, donors came forward.

A kidney disease patient's family and friends may increase their willingness to consider donation after get-togethers, according to a new report. The findings suggest that group education of patients' relatives and friends may help alleviate the organ shortage and increase the number of living donations.

While kidney transplantation from a living donor is the best treatment option for most patients with kidney failure, living donation is often overlooked because family members and friends are not aware they could be potential donors, and patients are reluctant or embarrassed to ask loved ones for a kidney.

Researchers from the Netherlands developed an intervention that addressed both of these issues. They invited relatives and friends of kidney disease patients to attend a meeting, usually at the patient's home, to learn about kidney disease, its impact on life, and how they could help the patient.

An experienced hospital social worker and a trained nurse practitioner took part in the discussions, and they provided information on the differences between dialysis and kidney transplantation, including the risks and benefits of living kidney donation for both recipient and donor.

In all 10 groups that participated in these discussions, the patients, relatives, and friends unanimously welcomed the approach, and the group felt an improved understanding and bonding. The researchers found that within three months, potential kidney donors came forward from all 10 groups.

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