

Kidney Surgery

Kidney surgery is usually done to remove a kidney. This is also called nephrectomy. Most kidney surgery is done for one of two reasons. Either there is a need to remove the kidney, or part of the kidney, due to disease, or a kidney is being removed because someone has agreed to be a live donor. A live donor is someone who donates a kidney while still alive. It is usually to a family member. There are certain degrees of surgery depending on what has to be done. In a partial procedure part of the kidney is removed because of disease or a tumor is removed from the kidney. A simple nephrectomy means that the entire kidney is removed. In what is called a radical procedure not only is the kidney removed but so are the surrounding lymph nodes and the adrenal gland. In bilateral kidney surgery both kidneys are removed. All of these are done because of illness, except in the situation where a kidney is removed to transplant. Transplant surgery that is done with a live donor used to be a major surgical procedure but there have been advances that have made this surgery not as difficult to heal from. It used to be that this type of kidney surgery required the removal of a rib to get access to the kidney. The donor would spend at least a week in the hospital and the healing took time. This was a safe way to remove a kidney from a live donor but the recovery was slow for the donor. Recent advances have made this type of kidney surgery less invasive. No longer must a rib be taken out. A smaller incision can now be made and the pain following surgery is much less. The opening is smaller and so heals better. Complications are less likely to occur because the surgery is less invasive. Though after this kind of surgery a person could have complications resulting from infection. This can be a danger because when the kidney is removed the other organs may be injured accidentally. It is the one thing that the donor must watch. If pain, fever, nausea or excessive swelling is noticed the donor should see their health care provider immediately.

About the Author

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