

Congratulations!

You have successfully come through surgery. Now the recovery process and life with your new kidney begins. This book is meant to help you and your care partners understand the process. It will help teach you what you need to know about taking care of yourself, and serve as a reference guide for common questions.

Considering the magnitude of the surgery and depending on the amount of time you and your family had to prepare for your transplant, you may be feeling somewhat overwhelmed. Remember that you need to heal emotionally, mentally, and spiritually as well as physically.

Although patients want to return to a “normal lifestyle” right away, in truth it will take time. It may be several months before you start to feel you have regained your strength and have a good understanding of how to manage your treatment. However, you will leave the hospital with a sound knowledge of your medicines, your diet, and your basic care.

As one patient commented, “You are not trading your situation for one that is medical free; but, in fact, you are changing from having to cope with a chronic illness to chronic management.” The good news is that you will

hopefully be able to have a quality-filled life and resume some of the activities that you enjoyed before you became so ill. This will take time and patience.

After your transplant, it may be helpful for you and your family to speak with another post transplant patient and his/her family, attend a transplant support group, and talk about your concerns with a transplant team member. Our transplant nurse coordinators, social workers, psychologist and chaplain are all available to you. Please ask your nurse or transplant team if you feel you need any of these services. You may be surprised to hear how normal your feelings are, but it is important to have your feelings and concerns addressed. It is important to receive acknowledgement that this is another change in your life and that it will take time to get comfortable with all the changes.

A transplant nurse will review this booklet with you before you go home. Please keep this booklet within reach and refer to it when you have questions.