

Kidney for US patient's transplant put in trash

August 26 2012

(AP)—A nurse accidentally disposed of a kidney from a living donor this month at a U.S. hospital, and doctors tried unsuccessfully for at least two hours to revive the organ in what medical experts describe as a rare accident, health officials said.

"Human error rendered the [kidney](#) unusable," University of Toledo Medical Center spokesman Toby Klinger said Saturday. He declined to give more details, citing the hospital's investigation and its respect for the privacy of the patients involved.

But one of the doctors involved told Dr. David Grossman, a Toledo-Lucas County health commissioner, that a nurse disposed of the kidney improperly.

Grossman told the Blade newspaper in Toledo that a man had donated the kidney to his older sister. Both the donor and the intended recipient have been released from the hospital, Klinger said.

The hospital has voluntarily suspended the live [kidney donor](#) program while they review what happened and determine how to prevent errors in the future, according to Dr. Jeffrey Gold, the medical center's chancellor and vice president for biosciences and [health affairs](#).

He said that doctors tried to save the kidney, but "the physician in consultation with the family decided to not take the risk, knowing there was a good chance for another highly compatible donor."

Grossman's office is not involved in the investigation or connected to the medical center, Klinger said. Grossman could not be reached for comment Saturday. The Toledo-Lucas County Health Department was closed.

This kind of accident is unheard of in organ transplant centers, and it was a good decision not to use the kidney, Dr. William Harmon, director of [kidney transplantation](#) at Boston Children's Hospital, told the Blade.

"This is unfortunately what medicine is like—it is not perfect, and there have been far worse cases where the donor has died," Harmon said.

Officials at the United Network for Organ Sharing, an agency that oversees the nation's transplant programs, could not be reached for comment Saturday.

There were 16,816 kidney transplants in the U.S. last year from live donors and from those who consented to organ donation through state registries should they die from an illness or accident, the newspaper reported.

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