

# Biopsy tests may lead to inappropriate discards of donated kidneys

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Researchers have found that discarding donated kidneys on the basis of biopsy findings may be inappropriate. The findings, which appear in an upcoming issue of the *Journal of the American Society of Nephrology* (JASN), may help address the organ shortage by keeping valuable organs from being thrown away.

Discard rates for deceased [donor](#) kidneys in the United States are at an all-time high, and transplant centers frequently cite [biopsy](#) findings as the reason for not accepting kidneys obtained from donors for transplantation. The importance of biopsy results in determining how well a [kidney](#) will function post-[transplant](#) remains unclear, however.

To assess the true impact of biopsy results on long-term outcomes, Sumit Mohan, MD, MPH (Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons and New York Presbyterian Hospital) and his colleagues analyzed nearly 1000 kidney biopsy samples that were processed under ideal circumstances and read by experienced renal pathologists.

The investigators found that biopsy results did not appear to impact long-term patient outcomes following transplantation of kidneys from living donors. Also, living donor kidneys with suboptimal biopsy results had better outcomes than deceased donor kidneys with optimal results. Outcomes following [kidney transplantation](#) using deceased donor kidneys were influenced by biopsy findings; however, the team estimated that even transplantation with kidneys with the worst biopsy findings would result in several additional years of life for a patient compared with remaining on dialysis. "Also, 73% of deceased donor kidneys with suboptimal biopsy results were still functioning at 5 years, suggesting that discards based on biopsy findings may be inappropriate and merits further study," said Dr. Mohan. "Understanding the true impact of suboptimal biopsy findings is essential to reducing the inappropriate discard of valuable kidneys from deceased donors."

**More information:** "Impact of Reperfusion Renal Allograft Biopsy Findings on Renal Transplantation Outcomes," *Journal of the American Society of Nephrology* (2017). [DOI: 10.1681/ASN.2016121330](https://doi.org/10.1681/ASN.2016121330)

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