

Long-term survival improving for kidney transplant patients

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If you're a kidney transplant patient, your chances of living a longer life are improving.

That's according to a recent review published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*. It showed that the five-year survival rate of [transplant](#) recipients who received a deceased donor [kidney](#) increased

from 66% in 1996-1999 to 78% in 2012-2015. And for patients who received a kidney from a living donor, that number improved from 79.5% to 88%.

What's behind the better outcomes?

Long-term survival rates for [kidney transplant](#) patients have improved over the past three decades.

"Significant advances have been made specifically in the detection of antibodies toward kidney transplants. The testing has become much more sensitive, and so now we're able to avoid transplants that may lead to an early rejection," says Dr. Carrie Schinstock, medical director of the Kidney Transplant Program at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

"There have also been significant advances in different immunosuppression and advances in our ability to detect viruses that can be detrimental to kidney transplant patients."

She says another factor has been the improvement at Mayo in posttransplant management of hypertension, hyperlipidemia, diabetes and obesity that can lead to cardiovascular death.

"We now have protocols in place for weight management posttransplant, and also to implement bariatric surgery pre- and posttransplant with the hope of improving long-term outcomes," says Dr. Schinstock.

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