The UCLA Medical Center: Kidney Transplantation

What is a kidney?

A kidney is an organ which filters the blood from waste products, such as cells, hormones, and other contents. A person has two kidneys, but can live just as well with one. There are three main functions of the kidneys:

1. Filtering and Regulating Blood
2. Maintaining Fluid Balance
3. Producing Hormones
What is a kidney?

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Facts About kidney transplants

Why are kidney transplants needed?
A kidney is an organ which filters the blood from excess liquids, dead cells, bacteria, and other contents. A human has 2 kidneys but can live just as well with one. There are more than a hundred diseases effecting the kidney.
Kidneys can fail due to more than a hundred diseases like chronic kidney disease (which is the gradual loss of kidney functionality over time). If a person's kidney fails, the person will be unable to clean their blood from excess liquids and substances like urea and ammonium. If these products are not removed, they could cause more diseases and other problems.

The patient will usually use dialysis until their kidneys either recover or until they receive a kidney transplant. Dialysis is the use of an external machine with the purpose of filtering your blood for you. This is usually expensive and cannot be afforded by many people. Since it is expensive and it requires the patient to go to a hospital many times a week to do it, it is only a temporary solution.
For a kidney transplant, a donor, or a person willing to give one of their kidneys for people who need one, can be alive or dead, but has to be in a very good health. Usually if the person is dead both kidneys can be taken and are then frozen, and if the person is alive, only one is taken and either put directly into another person or frozen for future use.

- If the kidney is directly transferred from person to person, the donor will have one operation to take out a kidney, which is then brought directly to another surgery room to be put into the receiving patient.
- When a kidney is taken from a donor, it is taken out of a small hole on the stomach, through which with the assistance of keyhole surgery it can be removed.
- After a kidney transplant the receiving patient usually receives medication to calm down the immune system because often the immune system might attack foreign tissue, like a transplanted kidney, and destroy it thinking it is harmful.
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Receiving Patient
- Risk of rejection of the transplanted organ
- Increased risk of infection due to the immunosuppressant medications
- Any of the side effects of the immunosuppressant like allergy
- Very small risk for acquiring a disease like AIDS, Hepatitis B, other viruses, or cancer from the donor organ

Donation
- Pain
- Infection at the incision site
- Allergic Reactions
- Daeth
- Pneumonia (infection of lungs)
- Blood clots (when certain blood cells are not where their supposed to be)
- Hemorrhaging (losing large amounts of wight)
How much does a kidney transplant cost?

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A very well done kidney transplant costs from around 250,000 to 270,000 dollars with all medication before and afterward as well as surgeons and other needs.

With this cost, poor people might have trouble finding the funding for a kidney transplant in time, especially in Mozambique as a big part of the population are unable to afford the cost in addition to the trip cost.
Are kidney transplants done in Mozambique?

There are no places to do kidney transplants in Mozambique. South Africa is the closest place and best place nearby to go for treatment at for example in Pretoria at "Jacaranda Hospital" or Johannesburg.
How do kidney transplants effect the workforce of a country?

Kidney transplants have little effect in the workforce of a country, more people are employed as surgeons and assistants. And more patients will come at night time for dialysis, which means the hospital need more night shift employees.

People with kidney failure are limited from doing any physical labor, or working in rural areas away from hospitals. They also need strict diets on the intake of liquid and food because their kidneys can handle little or none of its functionality. So many jobs are no longer an option if you have kidney failure.