If I do not multiple-list but transfer my care to another hospital, what happens?

If you want to end your listing at one hospital and transfer to another, your primary waiting time can be transferred as long as you coordinate with both programs. The new transplant program will probably ask you to request in writing to transfer the waiting time. Keep in mind that if you end your listing at one program before another program formally accepts you, you may risk losing all previous waiting time.

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Who are UNOS and the OPTN?
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All transplant programs and organ procurement organizations throughout the country are OPTN/UNOS members and are obligated to follow the policies the OPTN creates for allocating organs.

How am I listed for a transplant?
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You are considered for available organs based on a combination of medical facts entered into a computerized matching program. These factors include blood and tissue type, medical urgency, body size, distance between the donor and transplant hospital and time spent waiting for a transplant.

The distance between the donor and transplant hospital is important because the less time the organ must be preserved, the better the chance that it will function when transplanted. There are three levels considered:

- **Local**: This is the area served by the local organ procurement organization (OPO) where the donation occurs. There is one OPO in each state or larger (a multi-state area). Your transplant program can tell you what your local area is.
- **Regional or zone**: If there are no suitable local matches, organs are offered to patients at transplant hospitals in a wider area. Kidney, liver, pancreas and intestinal organs are first offered within one of 38 regions of the United States. Heart and lung offers are considered for candidates within 500 miles of the donor site, then 1,000 miles, then 1,500 miles.
- **Nationwide**: If there are no matches in the local area or region, organs will be offered to anyone in the United States who is a potential match.

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**If I list at more than one hospital, how is my waiting time considered?**
Depending on the organ you need, waiting may be shorter in matching you for an organ offer. Waiting time is a more important factor for certain organ types such as kidney and pancreas. It is less of a factor with heart, liver, and intestinal organs. For these organs more priority is given for factors such as medical urgency.

If you are a lung transplant candidate age 12 or older, waiting time will not be used at all in matching you with organ offers. Lung transplant priority is given for a combination of medical urgency and expected post-transplant survival.

Waiting time is a factor for lung transplant candidates age 11 and younger. If you are listed for a kidney transplant, your waiting time will be calculated from when you start dialysis to treat kidney failure. Your waiting time will be the same at any transplant program where you list, as long as each program has the same information about when you started dialysis.

If you are listed for any other organ type, your waiting time at each hospital will start from the date that program listed you. The longest amount of time you have waited at any hospital is called your primary waiting time. OPTN policy allows you to transfer your primary waiting time to another hospital, or to switch times between programs. (For example, if you have waited 6 months at Hospital A and 3 months at Hospital B, you could switch to have 3 months at Hospital A and 9 months at Hospital B).

You are not allowed to add up or split your total waiting time among multiple hospitals. (Again, assume you have waited 9 months at Hospital A and 6 months at Hospital B. You could not assume you have 15 total months of waiting time and assign 5 months to Hospital A and 10 months to Hospital B.)

Any request to transfer or switch waiting time must be approved by the transplant program involved. Most transplant programs require a written request to swap or transfer waiting time, which will then be considered by the transplant team.

I have received the booklet Questions and Answers for Transplant Candidates and Families about Multiple Listing and Waiting Time Transfer.

Signature of Transplant Candidate/Family Member

Date Received

Signature of Transplant Center Staff Member Providing Booklet

Note to transplant candidates/family members:
In accordance with OPTN policy, your transplant center is required to provide you with written information about multiple listing and transferal of waiting time. You can review the booklet, and ask your transplant center for a copy. Your transplant center is also responsible for providing you with written information about the medical evaluation of potential transplant candidates as described in the booklet. Your transplant center is required to provide you with written information about the changes to the OPTN policies and procedures described in this booklet. Your transplant center is required to provide you with written information about the changes to the OPTN policies and procedures described in this booklet.

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The distance between the donor and transplant hospital is important because the less time the organ must be preserved outside the donor’s body, the better the chance that it will function when transplanted. There are three levels considered:

- **Local**. This is the area served by the local organ procurement organization (OPO) where the donation occurs. Some OPOs have smaller areas that are often state-wide but can be smaller (such as a large city or part of a state) or larger (a multi-state area). Your transplant program can tell you what your local area is.

- **Region or zone**. If there are no OPOs serving your local area, then organs are first offered within one of 11 regions of the United States. Intestinal organs are first offered within one of 11 regions of the United States. If you are listed for any other organ type, your waiting time at each hospital will be calculated the same at each transplant program where you list, as long as each program has the same information about when you started dialysis.

- **Nationwide**. If there are no matches in the local area or region, organs will be offered to anyone in the United States who is a potential match.

What is multiple listing?
Multiple listing involves registering at two or more transplant hospitals. Since candidates at hospitals local to the donor hospital are usually considered ahead of those who are more distant, multiple listing may increase your chances of receiving a local organ offer.

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Some studies suggest multiple listing can shorten the average waiting times of kidney transplant candidates by several months. This does not guarantee that every multiple-listed patient will have a shorter waiting time.

Many factors affect how long you might wait for a transplant. Of course, not enough organs are donated each year to meet everyone’s needs. Everyone in the transplant community shares the goal of increasing organ donation to save and enhance more lives.

Other waiting-time factors include how urgent the patient is and how closely the donor and candidate match on body size and blood type. Some kidney and pancreas candidates have a “highly sensitized” immune system because of earlier transplants, pregnancy or multiple blood transfusions. Highly sensitized patients will often be good matches for a limited number of organ offers, so they often wait longer than non-sensitized candidates.

Are there any restrictions?
OPTN policy allows multiple listing. It will still be up to the individual hospital to decide whether to accept you as a candidate. You probably would not benefit from listing at multiple hospitals in the same local allocation area. This is because waiting time priority is first calculated among candidates at all hospitals within the local donation area, not for each hospital individually.

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If I list at more than one hospital, how is my waiting time considered?
Depending on the organ you need, waiting may be based in part on matching you for an organ offer. Waiting time is a more important factor for certain organ types such as kidney and pancreas. It is less of a factor with heart, liver, and intestinal organs. For these organs more priority is given for factors such as medical urgency.

If you are a lung transplant candidate age 12 or older, waiting time will not be used at all in matching you with organ offers. Lung transplant priority is given for a combination of medical urgency and expected post-transplant survival. Waiting time is a factor for lung transplant candidates age 11 and younger.

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How does this affect my health care once I am matched?
If you are matched while listed at more than one hospital, your transplant team will coordinate your care so that you will be prepared for the transplant procedure, regardless of which hospital you ultimately receive the organ from. After surgery, your care will be provided at the transplant hospital. You may have to make additional evaluations. You should also consider other costs associated with your transplant care.
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- **Local.** This is the area served by the local organ procurement organization (OPO) where the donation occurs. There are 58 OPOs nationwide. These areas are often statewide but can be smaller (such as a large city or part of a state) or larger (a multi-state area). Your transplant program can tell you what your local area is.

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How long will it take for an organ to be available from a deceased donor?
It depends on where you need a transplant. The current hospital(s) in matching for you will be considered first. Depending on what you need, waiting may be shorter or longer. The OPTN encourages organ sharing to give more patients a chance at a transplant. Waiting time is thus an important factor for certain organ types such as kidney and pancreas. It is less of a factor for heart, liver, and intestinal organs. For these organs more patients are considered potential candidates for each organ offer.

How does waiting time vary?
Organ waiting time for deceased donors is based on factors such as medical urgency and expected post-transplant survival. Waiting time is a factor for lung transplant candidates age 11 and younger. Since candidates at hospitals local to the donor hospital are usually considered ahead of those who are more distant, multiple listing may increase your chances of receiving a local organ offer.

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