

DEFINITIONS

Acute

Short, relatively severe

Analgesic

Pain medicine

Anemia

A low number of red blood cells

Anesthetic

Medication that dulls sensation in order to reduce pain

Acute Tubular Necrosis (ATN)

Temporary non-functioning of the kidney transplant due to the kidney's storage time prior to transplantation

Antibody

A part of the immune system that fights infection or foreign organisms or tissue

Antigen

The "marker" that starts antibody production

Arteriosclerosis

A hardening of the arteries that blocks blood flow to the kidneys

Bacteria

Germs that can cause disease or infection

Bilirubin

A chemical that is excreted by the liver in the bile

Bladder

The organ that receives and stores urine from the kidneys until it is urinated out of the body

Blood Urea Nitrogen

A waste product excreted by the kidney

Catheter

A soft rubber tube that is inserted into the bladder to drain urine

CellCept

An immunosuppressive drug used to limit or reverse rejection

Cholesterol

A kind of fat that is necessary for bodily function, but that in excess can cause heart disease

Chronic

Persisting over a long period of time

Chronic Renal Insufficiency

Permanent damage to both kidneys, treated by dialysis or transplantation

Coagulopathy

Abnormal blood clotting

Creatinine

An indicator of kidney function, produced by muscle metabolism; the higher the creatinine level, the lower the kidney function

Crossmatch

A test that determines the compatibility of the donor's blood with that of a potential recipient

CT Scan

A 3-dimensional x-ray of internal organs

DEFINITIONS

Cyclosporine

A powerful immunosuppressive drug

Cyst

A sac-like structure that contains fluid and matter

Cytomegalovirus (CMV)

A common viral infection that can be harmful to transplant recipients if contracted after transplant

Diabetes

A disease characterized by high levels of blood sugar

Diabetic Nephropathy

Kidney failure as a result of diabetes

Dialysis

A process by which blood is cleaned to restore chemical balance

Diastolic Blood Pressure

The bottom number when the blood pressure is measured; this is the pressure on the arteries between heart beats

Echocardiogram

A test that uses beams of ultrasonic waves to measure the motion and position of the heart and nearby tissue

Edema

Swelling of a specific area of the body, such as the hands or legs, due to retention of excess fluids

Electrocardiogram

A test that uses electrodes placed on the chest to measure the heart rhythm and look for injury to heart tissue

Electrolyte

A dissolved mineral, such as magnesium or potassium

Endoscope

A small telescope-like instrument that is used to examine the esophagus, stomach and small intestine

Endotracheal Tube

A tube inserted through the mouth and into the windpipe to aid a person in breathing during surgery

End Stage Renal Disease

When chronic renal failure progresses to the point at which the kidneys are permanently functioning at less than 10% of their capacity

Enzyme

A bodily protein that can break down other substances

Gastrointestinal (GI)

The tract between the mouth and the rectum, including the intestines and stomach

Glomerular Filtration Rate (GFR)

A test that determines the level of kidney function

Glucose

Sugar found in the blood or urine

Graft

A transplanted tissue or organ, such as a kidney or pancreas

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Helper T-cell

The white blood cell that tells the immune system to fight infection or foreign substances, such as transplanted tissue

Hematocrit

The measure of the number of red-blood cells in the blood

Hepatitis

Liver inflammation, usually caused by a virus

Herpes

A family of viruses that can cause lip, genital sores, or other symptoms

Human Leukocyte Antigens (HLA)

Genetic markers, inherited from one's parents

Human Leukocyte Antigen (HLA) Compatibility

A test done on the donor and the potential recipient to determine how actively the recipient's cells would attack the graft

Hypertension

High blood pressure

Hypotension

Low blood pressure

Immune System

Complex fighting mechanism of the body that responds to foreign organisms or tissues that enter or are placed in the body

Immunosuppression

Decrease of the body's immune response, accomplished through the use of certain drugs, in order to help prevent or control a rejection following a transplant

Insulin

A hormone produced by the pancreas that regulates blood sugar levels

Intravenous (IV)

Refers to fluids or medications administered to patients directly into a vein via a needle or catheter

Jaundice

Yellowish discoloration of the skin and eyes indicating an excess of bilirubin in the blood

Kidney

Organs located on both sides of the spine at waist level that rid the body of waste materials via the production of urine

Kidney Failure - Acute

Rapidly diminished kidney function that can be reversed

Kidney Failure - Chronic

Diminished kidney function over time that is irreversible

Leukocyte

A white blood cell that helps fight infection

Nephrectomy

The removal via surgery of one or both kidneys

DEFINITIONS

Nephrologist

A physician who specializes in diagnosing and treating kidney disease

Noncompliance

Failure to follow health care instructions regarding taking medications and treatments, getting tests on time, and taking vital signs; noncompliance often shortens the lifetime of the transplanted organ(s)

Orally

By mouth

Panel Reactive Antibody (PRA)

A laboratory process in which a patient's blood is mixed with a panel of human blood in order to determine the overall level of sensitization of the patient to foreign blood and tissue; a score of 0/42 or 0% sensitized is best, a score of 42/42 or 100% sensitized is worst; causes of sensitization can include pregnancies, blood transfusions and previous transplants

Phlebotomy

Removal of approximately one pint of blood through a vein

Platelet

A small blood cell necessary for clotting

Pneumocystis Carinii Pneumonia (PCP)

A type of pneumonia that is mostly contracted by individuals with suppressed immune systems

Polycystic Kidney Disease (PKD)

A hereditary disease that causes cysts to grow in place of normal kidney tissue

Potassium

A mineral; high potassium levels can irritate the heart and is a problem often associated with poor kidney function

Red Blood Cells

The part of the blood that transports oxygen to body tissues

Rejection

When the immune system attacks what it thinks is a foreign substance (such as a transplanted kidney)

Renal

Anything regarding the kidneys

Sepsis

A severe infection that has spread to the blood stream

Shingles

A herpes virus infection that usually affects a nerve, causing localized pain

Signs

Things you or someone else can see that are determined by measurement, such as an increase in temperature or blood pressure

Simultaneous Pancreas-Kidney (SPK)

When both a pancreas and a kidney are transplanted into a recipient

DEFINITIONS

Sleepy Kidney

An expression for the temporary delay in kidney function that sometimes follows transplantation (also known as ATN)

Sodium

The main salt that is found in blood

Stenosis

Narrowing of a passage in the body (also known as “stricture”)

Systolic Blood Pressure

The top number when the blood pressure is measured. This is the pressure when the heart muscle contracts

Symptoms

Things you feel, such as pain, dizziness or fatigue

T Cells

White blood cells that play a major part in rejection

Thrombosis

The development of a blood clot

Thrush

A fungal infection found in the mouth

Tissue Typing

Identifying a person’s major antigens used to evaluate the match between a donated organ and a potential recipient via a blood test

Toxins

Waste products in the blood that are poisonous to the body in high concentrations

Ureter

One of a pair of tubes that carries urine from the kidney to the bladder for elimination

Urethra

The tube from the bladder which carries urine out of the body

Urinary Tract

The body system that produces, transports, stores and eliminates urine; the urinary tract includes the kidneys, ureters, bladder and urethra

United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS)

The national body that sets policies for organ allocation in order to ensure fairness; UNOS also maintains statistics on different transplant programs and collects scientific data on transplant recipients and donors

Virus

A small germ that causes infection

White Blood Cells

The part of the blood that fights infection