How to Prepare: Transplant Kidney Biopsy

Preparation is similar to other biopsies, with a few transplant-specific points:

- ☐ Blood tests first: blood count, clotting and kidney function are checked, and the team usually reviews your recent anti-rejection drug levels (such as tacrolimus). Bring an up-to-date list of ALL your medicines.
- ☐ Keep taking your anti-rejection medicines unless the transplant team tells you otherwise — do not skip doses around the biopsy.
- ☐ Blood thinners: aspirin, clopidogrel, warfarin, apixaban and similar medicines are usually paused for a few days before. Ask the team which of yours to stop, and when to restart.
- ☐ Tell the team about any fever, cough, urinary symptoms, diarrhoea or other signs of infection, and about allergies — after a transplant, infection changes the plan.
- ☐ Fasting: you may be asked not to eat or drink for a few hours beforehand. Follow the instructions that come with your appointment.
- ☐ Plan for observation: most people rest under observation for several hours afterwards and many go home the same day. Arrange a lift and keep the rest of the day quiet.

What to expect

Before	You lie on your back in the procedure room — no need to lie face down as with a native kidney biopsy. The transplant kidney, in the front of your pelvis (the lower right or left belly), is found with ultrasound, and the skin over it is cleaned and numbed with local anaesthetic.
During	Under ultrasound guidance, a thin biopsy needle passes through the numbed skin into the transplant kidney and takes one or more small cores of tissue. You may hear a click and feel pressure, and you may be asked to lie very still or hold your breath briefly. It usually takes about 15 to 20 minutes.
After	You rest in bed for a few hours while the team checks your blood pressure, the biopsy site and your urine. The graft area may ache a little, and a bruise is common. A small amount of blood in the urine can occur and usually clears. Most people go home the same day.

Medically reviewed by Dr. Mohamed Ibrahim, MD, PhD — physician-scientist. Last reviewed October 2026.

This handout is general information to help you prepare; it does not replace the instructions from your own care team. If your clinic gave you different instructions, follow theirs.