

## Give 5 to Save Lives

### *A Closer Look at One State Employee's Wait*



We've all had to spend time waiting. Waiting for the bus. Waiting for dinner. Waiting with great anticipation for a special holiday to arrive. But the longest wait would have to be the one upon which your life depends. Rhonda Kremer is going through that kind of wait.

"I've been on the organ donation wait list since last August, hoping for a new kidney," says Kremer, a fiscal administrative manager in the Office of Financial and Budget Services for the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services.

"It started one day with a nose bleed at work that I just could not get to stop. I went to my doctor, and after several tests, the diagnosis was made that my kidneys were not functioning right."

Kremer has *focal segmental glomerulosclerosis*, a disease that scars the kidneys' filters, keeping the vital organs from doing their jobs of cleaning the body of waste materials. Right now, she undergoes dialysis treatments, but doctors tell her those treatments only do about 13-17 percent of what a normal-functioning kidney does. In addition, the process is lengthy and requires her to spend 3 ½ hours each time she goes to dialysis... three times a week. Kremer has also had to restrict what she eats to what is called a renal diet: reduced phosphorous, potassium, salt and even liquid intake.

Kremer's family members eagerly stepped up to be donors, but unfortunately, either they didn't match or they had health issues of their own that kept them from donating a kidney.

Kremer's not alone in her wait. While millions in Missouri have signed up for the **Organ Donor Registry**, there are still more than 1,600 Missourians who wait for a life-saving organ donor transplant with the vast majority hoping for a new kidney. Since she's waiting for a "cadaver donor," doctors can't really tell her how long it might be until she gets a new kidney.

Despite the obstacles, Kremer remains optimistic. She knows that if enough people sign up, an eventual match will be found.

"I'd just like to make an appeal to everyone to take a few minutes and sign up on Missouri's Organ Donor Registry," says Kremer. "You can make a difference."

To see and hear Kremer tell her own story, [click here](#).

For more information, go to one of these web sites:

[Missouri Organ Donor Program](#)  
[United Network for Organ Sharing](#)  
[National Kidney Foundation](#)  
[Missouri Kidney Program](#)