MIKEL PRIETO: Today, I want to talk to you about preemptive kidney transplantation. A patient, when it has end stage kidney disease, he needs what we call renal replacement therapy. And it needs to have something to replace the function of the kidneys. This is done primarily in two ways, either with dialysis-- which is a machine that will clean your blood and basically replace the function of the kidney-- or a new kidney, a kidney transplant.

By far, the best option of these two is getting a kidney transplant. And sometimes, we can do this before the patients reach the needs for dialysis. In these cases, the patient are able to avoid dialysis altogether, and they go from having a deceased kidney to having a brand new, working kidney. This is usually done with a living donor kidney transplant. And if we do this before dialysis, this is what we call preemptive kidney transplantation.

Mayo Clinic is fairly unique, in the sense that we are able to transplant the large majority of our patients-- about 80%-- with living donor kidneys. Also, about half of our patients get a transplant before they reach dialysis, which is fairly unique. So we strongly encourage our patients to find a donor and get transplanted before they reach the need for dialysis.

Mayo Clinic has the tools and the people that can help you figure out how to spread the word around your friends, family, and community, so we can find a living donor, a healthy person that is willing to give you a kidney so that we can do a transplant preemptively.

Transplantation from a living donor kidney is a safe procedure. The success rate is very high. For the donors, their surgery is safe. We do it laparoscopically with very small incisions. And we have excellent outcomes. The vast majority of donors are very happy that they can help their friends and relatives do this, and it's a very satisfying option for a lot of people.

We strongly encourage you, if you have kidney disease, to consider early the option of a kidney transplant, and the option of a preemptive transplant, so we can completely avoid the need for dialysis. This is by far the best quality of life that you will have. And you will be able to return to work and to a normal life very easy and promptly.