

By: Sabrina A. 2008 Science Editor

This Girl Has 4 Fully Developed Kidneys!

She will donate one pair

Anatomy books tell you that humans have one pair of kidneys. But reality can sometimes get you astounded. What may the sensation be when going to the hospital because of a stomach pain and they tell you you've got four kidneys? This is what happened to the British Laura Moon, 18: an ultrasound scan revealed she possess two pairs of normally developed kidneys. Such cases are extremely rare, while having three is more common, affecting one person out of 125. What's unusual in this case is that all four are fully developed and functional, as normally the extra kidneys are just a piece of non-functional tissue. The 18-year-old is now hoping to donate the extra organs for transplant operations. "I think if I've got four, I don't need all four. I hope I can help somebody else while I am young. I will do everything in my power to become a donor," said Laura, a customer services adviser from Leeds. The extra-kidneys are not normally associated with issues, but can turn the patients more vulnerable to urinary infections. Moon found about her different anatomy 6 months ago, when she underwent a test at Seacroft Hospital in Leeds, after a road accident. "I realized that the doctor scanning me hadn't said anything for a long time. I thought he was going to give me bad news. The guy just said 'You have got four kidneys'. He measured them and I have two which are 14cm and two which are 9cm. Then he also asked if I would mind if he took some photos to show to university students," said Laura. "To have completely duplex kidneys on both sides is extremely rare," said transplant surgeon Niaz Ahmad, from Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust. "Many extra kidneys are fully functional, meaning Laura should be able to donate. It is a relatively rare condition. Ordinarily they are left alone unless the patient is suffering any problems. But Laura will be able to manage perfectly well with two so assuming they are working correctly there is no reason why she shouldn't donate them," said consultant urological surgeon Dr Robyn Webber, of Fife Acute Hospitals. Living donor kidney transplants could make now over 25 % of the cases of kidney donation.