

Native American Kidney Transplant

Video	Audio
	For years Christopher Leslie has been hoping for this moment ... taking his daughter Olivia to the Huhugam Ki Museum in Phoenix, a place dedicated to the history of his Salt River Pima Native American community.
	Nats of Christopher talking to daughter
Christopher Leslie, kidney transplant recipient	"I guess I just feel like I have a sense of culture and the history of our people. And it's good to have like an understanding of that — just so you have those cultural ties."
	Trips like this weren't always so easy. For almost five years, Christopher battled advanced-stage kidney disease that required daily dialysis.
	"I was freaking out because I was planning to join the military or do something else in my life. I had an 8-month-old at the time, and so I was worried about that."
	Christopher became one of the more than 100,000 people in the US on the kidney transplant waiting list. The wait can take years, but technology is helping get more organs to more recipients. In Christopher's case surgeons needed more time to perform the transplant so the donor kidney was preserved inside this special pump. Dr. Kunam Reddy says he aims to do a kidney transplant within 24 hours but in this case the kidney was held safely on the pump for almost 45 hours and the transplant was a success.
Kunam Reddy, M.D., Transplant Surgeon Mayo Clinic	"Very exciting field for me personally to see both sides of the coin— the donor family, how gratified they are and finding something meaningful out of a hopeless situation for the family and seeing recipients who have been on their death bed and suffering, being on dialysis for many years, having a new shot at life, new chance for life. It's an amazing and gratifying career for me to see this field come where we are today."
	Christopher is grateful for his health and the chance to pass along to his daughter the history of his Native American culture.
	"Before my transplant, my health was deteriorating. I was getting sicker, the dialysis was getting longer. Now I'm basically free to do whatever I want. Thank you for saving my life."
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Marty Velasco Hames.