

Writing to Your Kidney Donor Family

Often, a person who has had a kidney transplant wants to thank their donor family. Transplant Manitoba-Pediatric Kidney Program supports families if they choose to write to their donor family.

We are here to help.

Deciding to write to a donor family

The decision to write to a donor family is personal and different for everyone. You can choose write to your donor's family anytime. There is no time limit. Write to your donor family when you feel ready.

Some people choose to write to their donor family on:

- Transplant anniversary dates
- Holidays
- Special times or events such as graduations, birthdays or weddings

What should I write about?

- Share what you feel like sharing about yourself and your health. For example:
 - Thank the donor family
 - Express sorrow for their loss
 - Describe how the transplant has affected you and your family
 - Talk about what significant events have happened since your transplant

Including religious comments is difficult because the religion of the donor is unknown.

Is there anything I cannot share with my donor family?

Privacy rules have been set by the governments of Canada and Manitoba. Identifying information cannot be provided. This includes things like:

- Your first or last name, or any family members name
- Your age
- Where you live
- The hospital where you received your transplant
- The date of your transplant
- What you or your family do for a living



Who can help me if I am having trouble writing to my donor?

It can be hard to find the right words if you decide to write to you donor family. If you need help, talk to you clinic nurse. You can also contact Transplant Manitoba – Gift of Life staff. They have experience dealing with donor families. Call the program at 204-787-3481.



How does my letter reach the donor family?

- Place your card or letter into an unsealed envelope.
- On a separate piece of paper, write your full name and date of transplant.
- Place both the paper and the unsealed envelope into a sealed envelope and address it to:

*Transplant Manitoba – Gift of Life Program
GF441-820 Sherbrook Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3A 1R9*

You can also give the envelope to your clinic nurse. The nurse will send it to the Gift of Life Program.

Will my donor family accept my letter and will I hear back from my donor family?

- The Transplant Manitoba – Gift of Life Program will contact the family to ask if they would like to receive your card or letter. If the kidney came from another province or country, Transplant Manitoba – Gift of Life Program will send the request to that donor program. It is important to be respectful of the donor family's wishes.
- The donor family may or may not accept your letter. If they do not to accept the letter it will be returned to you.
- If the donor family accepts the letter, you may or you may not hear back from your donor family.
- Some donor families may still be dealing with their grief and sorrow, and may not wish to be reminded of the loss of their loved one.
- Others may be happy to hear from you, and to learn how their loved one's kidney has helped you and your health.

We are here to help!

If you have any questions about this information call the Pediatric Kidney Transplant Nurse at 204-787-4725 OR Toll free at 1-877-499-8774–extension 77475

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