

30 Day Corporate Challenge



WEEK 4

The Last Week – Finishing Strong!

There are many ways you can be a donor and help the David Foster Foundation improve the lives of children needing life-saving organ transplants.

You can:

- **REGISTER AS A DONOR!**

If you haven't already, it's easy and can make such a difference in so many lives one day in the future.

- **DONATE NOW!**

Make a financial contribution and help us help families across the country!

- **DONATE YOUR TIME!**

Become a volunteer and help us raise awareness about the importance of becoming a registered organ donor!

During this last week, if you haven't already registered, please do so, and talk to your family and friends about your decision. All the participants in the challenge who make the decision to become a registered organ donor will receive a certificate from the David Foster Foundation as our thank you!

Frequently asked questions about organ donation:

Can my family overrule my decision to donate?

It is common medical practice to reaffirm an individual's consent to donate with the family. In almost all cases, families honour and respect their loved ones' donation decision if they are given evidence that it's what their loved one wanted. Therefore it is important to register your consent to donate so that your family can be advised of your decision to donate.

What does it mean to consent to donate organs and tissue for research?

Much medical research depends on the use of human

biological material. It often provides the best way of understanding how the body works and reacts to treatment. It can also help advance and improve organ and tissue transplantation. If for some reason your organs and tissues cannot be transplanted, they can be donated for research purposes if you have specifically indicated consent to donate organs and tissue for both transplant and research.

How do you know if your organs and tissue are suitable to donate?

Eligibility to donate is assessed at the time of death. Most diseases do not automatically exclude a person from donating. A medical and social history interview, similar to the one completed to donate blood, is performed with the family. Every organ is tested for suitability to ensure that as many people as possible can be helped through transplant. Organs or tissue not suitable for transplantation can be used for scientific research and medical education. Currently important research is being done on diseases of the eye, improving the quality of lungs to see if they can be transplanted, and collecting stem cells from the spinal cord to help patients with spinal cord injuries.



Benjamin, heart transplant at four months, now two years old

Be a
Donor,
Save a
Life.

Can donor families learn about or meet the recipients?

Donation is a confidential and anonymous process. Donor family members and recipients do not know each other's identity. Donor family members are provided general information about recipient(s) via a letter. They may write to each other through their local transplant organization, however all identifying information is removed.

Who will receive my organs and tissue? Will they stay in Canada?

The hospital will contact the local transplant coordinating organization, which keeps a list of everyone in the province who is waiting for an organ transplant. With luck, the tissue and blood type of the donor is matched to an individual(s) on the waiting list. If a match is found the individual(s) who, for medical reasons, most needs a transplant will receive the donated organs. If the medical urgency is the same, the individual on the waiting list the longest will receive the organ. If there is no suitable match, a cross-reference is made across Canada and possibly in the United States. This is done to save lives.

Living Donation

Living donation occurs when a living person donates an organ or part of an organ for transplant to another person in need.

It is one of the most important sources of organs for transplantation and a significant portion of the increase in organ donation over the last ten years. However, the availability of organs from living donors does not meet the crucial need of the more than 4,000 Canadians on transplant waiting lists.

Living donors are most often family members or close friends of the recipient. However, other types of living donation are available, including anonymous donation, list exchange and paired exchange.

Key Facts about Living Donation

The first successful living donor transplant was a kidney transplant performed in Boston in 1954 between 23-year-old identical twins.

The most common living donation is kidney. Living kidney donation is the most successful of all transplant procedures and long-term transplant survival rates are higher than for recipients who receive an organ from a deceased donor.

Advances in transplant medicine have made it possible to transplant a part of the liver, lung, small bowel and pancreas in a living donation. Other types of living donation are under investigation in this rapidly evolving field.

Living donation has many advantages:

- Potential to reduce waiting times for transplant to a matter of months rather than possibly years for deceased donation, contributing to better health after transplant surgery.
- Typically, the organ donated by a living donor is healthier at the time of the operation, leading to a better-functioning organ after transplantation, and longer graft survival.
- Sense of satisfaction for the donor who has helped to save or improve the life of another.

Make a difference and help the David Foster Foundation improve the lives of children needing life-saving organ transplants.



Happy and healthy Brynn with her family

Be a Donor, Save a Life.



Be a Living Donor

Liz Hanuse has known since her son Victor was 11 months old that he would one day need a kidney transplant. Just before his 18th birthday, he got that transplant – a kidney from his mom.

Victor was born with a genetic metabolic disorder called Cystinosis, a condition where cystine crystals cannot flush out of his body. The crystals accumulate in all of his muscles and organs. The kidneys are the organs most affected by the disorder.

For Liz, becoming her son's donor was an easy decision to make. "Once I knew my son would need a transplant, I changed my lifestyle dramatically and began eating healthier so I could be ready if I were ever to be able to be a donor of any sort," Liz says. "It wasn't a hard decision, it meant helping my child live longer, my love for my family means going to any length to help one another when needed."

As Victor's kidneys began declining rapidly after years of treatment, Liz and Victor began talking to his doctors about dialysis, and transplants involving either living or deceased donors. As soon as Liz found out that her son would get a transplant quicker if a living donor could be found, the search began. Liz began getting tested to see if she could be a match for Victor in August 2009 and discovered she was a match early in October.

The process was an emotional one for both mother and son. "When Victor and I had a quiet moment the day before his surgery we were walking along the hallway, he hugged me and kissed me and said "Thank you mom, I love you for everything you do for me, lets do it – I'm ready", Liz recalls. "And yes," she says, "I cried."

Victor had both of his kidneys removed, so the operation was much longer and more complex than a regular kidney transplant. Liz was discharged a few days after the transplant, but Victor stayed in hospital for nearly three weeks afterwards.

Both mother and son are getting stronger each day, both still get fatigued and are still healing but are getting back to their regular activities.

"I can never express the feeling I had when I was told my son's body took to my kidney," Liz says. "I sobbed uncontrollably. It was like the day he was born, the same joy!"

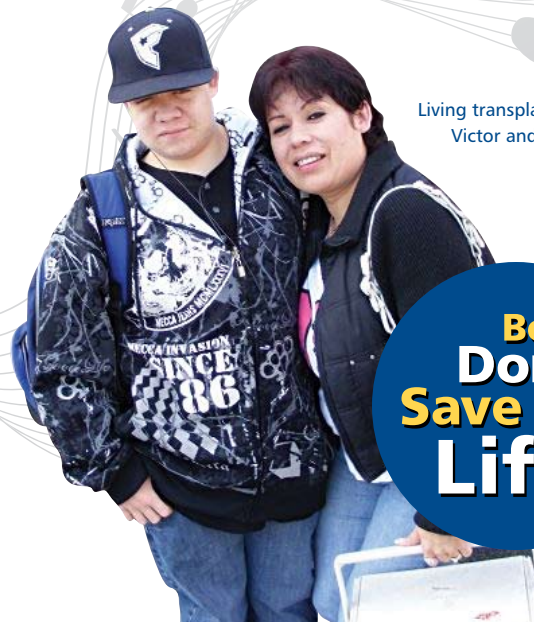
"To know I was able to help someone else in their time of need, their life depended on someone else and I was chosen, that was so special for me," Liz says. "Being a donor for my son made it all the more special. It was like seeing my baby take his first breath again. I personally would do it again if I could, now and after I pass away. Being a donor has allowed me to celebrate the gift of life with my son."

"It wasn't a hard decision, it meant helping my child live longer, my love for my family means going to any length to help one another when needed."

Register to be an organ donor today
– someday, you may save a life!

www.davidfosterfoundation.com

Visit our web site and sign up to receive
our quarterly newsletter "Celebrate"



Living transplant recipient
Victor and mother, Liz

**Be a
Donor,
Save a
Life.**