



Living Liver *Donation*



Patricia Kram
Liver Transplant Recipient, 2008

Harold Durst
Liver Transplant Recipient, 2006





Dustin and Chance Turner
Living Liver Recipient and Donor, 2006
(pictured with mom, Nancy)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN LIVER DONATION.

This guide is designed to provide you with helpful information and answer some of the most common questions about living liver donation. Living liver donors are a very select group of people. Donating a liver is an extraordinary, generous act. You are giving a gift of life to someone in need.

WHAT IS LIVING DONATION?

A person can donate a portion of their liver to someone in need of a liver transplant. For more information, and for a video about living donation, please visit our website at www.UniversityTransplantCenter.com.

WHY SHOULD I CONSIDER THIS?

- Some people wait a long time for a liver transplant.
- Some people die waiting.
- It is a relatively safe procedure that has been available since the late 1990s.
- A healthy liver can grow back if a piece is removed, like the skin. The remaining portion will grow in the donor and the transplanted portion will grow in the recipient.

WHO CAN BE A DONOR?

Donors must be:

- In excellent health with no chronic medical conditions.
- Between the ages of 21 and 55 years old.
- Able to understand the risks and possible complications involved with the surgery.



Kristal and Lori Lindsey
Living Liver Donor and Recipient, 2002

WHAT ARE THE REASONS I CANNOT BE A DONOR?

- Any infectious disease (HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B or C, etc.).
- Ongoing, chronic medical issues (diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease).
- Active substance abuse.
- Morbid obesity.
- History of cancer.

WHO CAN GET A LIVER?

- A candidate on a transplant list.
- Someone who is medically stable and who understands the possible risks to the donor. This often corresponds to a MELD score in the range of 15 – 25.

WHERE DO I START?

A series of steps are used to see if you can donate a part of your liver. Each step is designed for use to learn more about your health as well as give you more time to think through this important decision. The evaluation may take several weeks to complete. At any time, you can change your mind. Here are the steps:

- 1. Fill out the Living Donor Screening Form.** After you send in your completed form, Living Donor Coordinator will contact you. If there are no issues, the nurse will begin the screening process.
- 2. Financial Clearance.** Donor testing and surgery is covered by the recipient's funding.
- 3. Undergo lab tests and exams.** You will have blood drawn to find out if your blood type is compatible with the recipient. If you are compatible, the nurse will order a complete medical workup, including blood and urine testing, a lung x-ray, cardiology testing, cancer screenings, tuberculosis testing, and a CT scan of your liver.
- 4. Meet with doctors and social workers.** They will talk to you about the donation process and answer any questions you may have.
- 5. Testing complete.** If all the test results are normal and the transplant selection committee and insurance have approved the donation, then a surgery date will be set.

WHAT IS A DONOR ADVOCATE?

The Living Donor Coordinator is your advocate, responsible for making sure you are safe to donate and have all the information you need to make an informed decision. You have the right to change your mind or decline donation at any time. Your privacy will be protected regardless of your decision.

Yolanda Bundick
Liver Transplant Recipient, 2004



THE TRANSPLANT TEAM REVIEWS ALL CASES ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS TO DETERMINE SUITABILITY FOR SURGERY/TRANSPLANT FOR THE DONOR AND RECIPIENT.

WHAT CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT THE SURGERY?

- The surgery is four to six hours long.
- Your exams will determine the amount of liver that will be removed. 25 – 30% of your liver will be removed for a child recipient. 55 – 70% of your liver will be removed for an adult recipient.
- Your surgery and the recipient’s surgery will be scheduled for the same time.
- While a piece of your liver is being removed, doctors will be removing the recipient’s diseased liver.
- Your piece of liver will be surgically attached inside the recipient.
- When you wake up, you will have a large incision. You will be provided with pain medication as you need it.
- You will go to the Transplant Intensive Care Unit.
- Your liver will enlarge, or regenerate, to meet your body’s needs within approximately four weeks.

THERE ARE RISKS AND POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS TO ANY SURGERY, INCLUDING LIVER DONATION.

These risks may include:

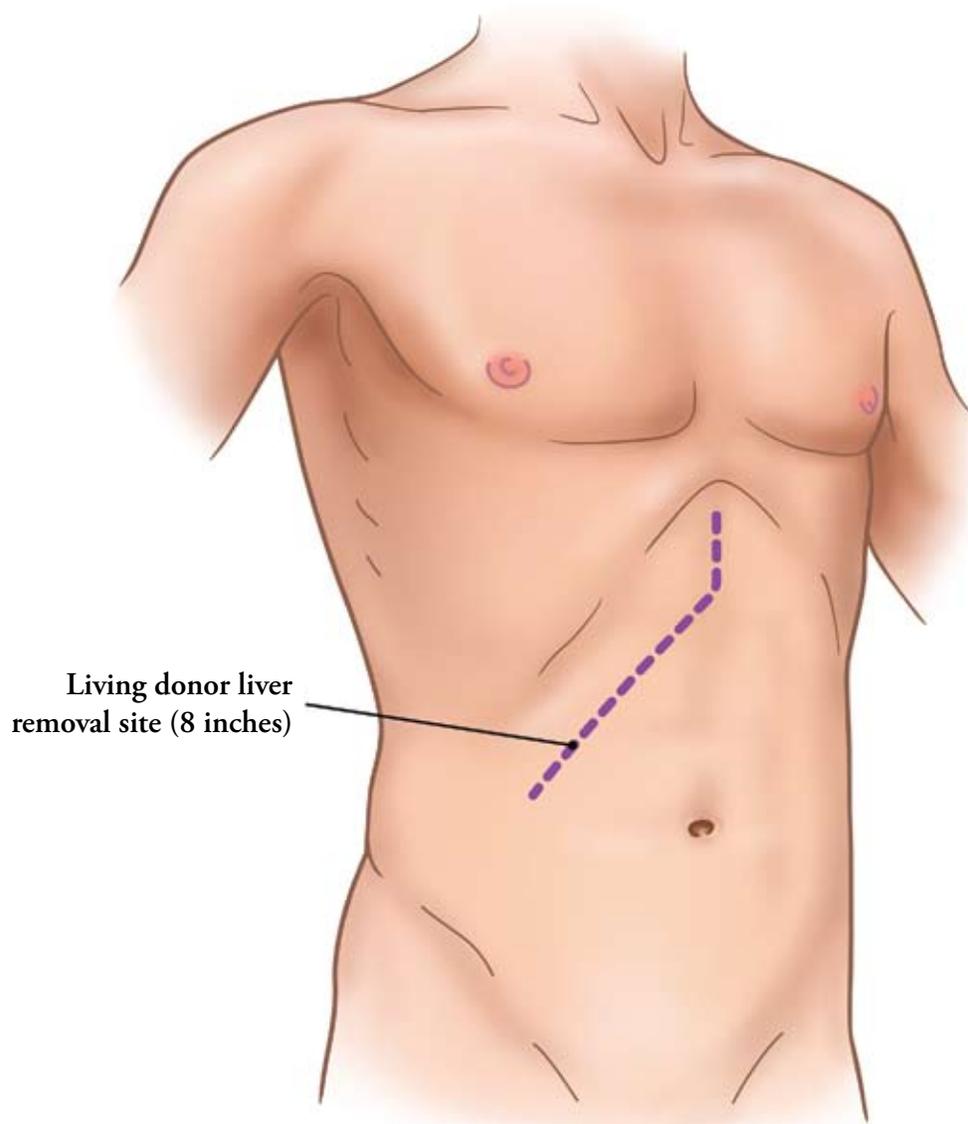
- Bleeding.
- Infection.
- Pain.
- Bile duct narrowing or leaking.
- Death.
- Liver failure, maybe requiring a liver transplant.
- Some donors may feel tired and uncomfortable for 4 – 6 months after donation.
- Donors usually experience more discomfort than the recipient.
- Some donors may feel “down” or “depressed” after donation. This is usually just a temporary, mild depression that resolves quickly. If it persists, there is help available for you.
- Possible denial of health, life, or disability insurance coverage in the future if donation is considered a pre-existing condition.
- Post-op nausea and constipation after discharge.
- Financial hardship if unexpected complications occur.



Sarah and Teresa Chandler

*Living Liver Donor and Recipient, 2010
(pictured with (l to r) Dr. Juan Guerrero, Dr. Ken Washburn,
Mark Dedmon, PA-C, Liz Sweeney, PA-C, Dr. Glenn Halff)*

LIVING DONOR INCISION





Tammy Johnson

*Living Donor Liver Recipient, 2006
(pictured with Dr. Vincent Speeg)*

WILL I NEED TO BE ON MEDICATION?

You will be given medication for pain and antibiotics to prevent infection.

HOW SOON CAN I GO BACK TO WORK?

The average hospital stay is six to eight days. Depending on the type of work you do, you may be able to go back to work in about eight weeks. Donors will not be able to do any heavy lifting or strenuous activity for eight weeks.

**I AM STILL NOT SURE ABOUT BEING A DONOR.
WHO CAN I TALK TO?**

We can set up as many meetings as you need to talk with one of our Transplant Surgeons. One of the Transplant Social Workers is also available. The Living Donor Coordinator is your resource and can connect you with someone else who has donated.

By offering this type of surgery, we hope to transplant more patients in a timely manner, provide options for our patients and their families, and decrease the number of people dying while waiting for a liver transplant.

After all the exams are completed, if you become a donor or choose not to donate, the fact that you are considering the surgery is a true act of unselfishness. Your health is of the utmost importance to us.

IMPORTANT BENEFITS FOR DONORS:

- Texas State Government Code Section 661.916 grants State employees 30 working days paid leave per year to serve as an organ donor and five working days paid leave per year to serve as a bone marrow donor. Federal employees also have the benefit available.
- The National Living Donor Assistance Center (NLDAC) provides financial assistance for travel for out of town donors who qualify. Our Transplant Social Workers can assist with the application process. For more information, visit www.livingdonorassistance.org.



REMEMBER, WE ARE HERE FOR YOU.





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Experts On **Life**.

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