

The View of Lifesharing

Donor families feel comfort in knowing that they have helped others and appreciate hearing from you and your family.

Lifesharing Community Organ and Tissue Donation encourages written correspondence between recipients and donor families. All correspondence is completely anonymous and confidential.

Lifesharing is a community-based, federally designated, nonprofit organization dedicated to saving and enhancing lives. Our work includes promoting donation, recovering organs and tissue for transplantation, and supporting transplant recipients and donor families.

Established in 1984, Lifesharing is responsible for organ and tissue recovery services to approximately 31 hospitals and 3.0 million residents of San Diego and Imperial Counties. We provide comprehensive information to families as they make their decisions on organ and tissue donation.

If you need further information about writing to recipients or are interested in volunteering for Lifesharing, please call Lifesharing at 619-521-1983. Lifesharing needs your help to bring the important message of organ tissue donation to our community.

Will I Hear from the Donor Family?

You may or may not hear from them. Some donor families have said that writing about their loved one and their decision to donate helps them in their grieving process. Other families, even though they are comfortable with their decision to donate, prefer privacy and choose not to write to the transplant recipients.

Remember that the donor's family may still be coping with the loss of their loved one and individuals manage grief in different ways.

Lifesharing will review your correspondence and forward it to the donor family. In the case that a donor family does not wish to communicate, a Lifesharing staff member will notify you of their decision.

Adapted and reprinted with permission from Lifesource, Upper Midwest Procurement Organization, Inc. Minneapolis, Minnesota



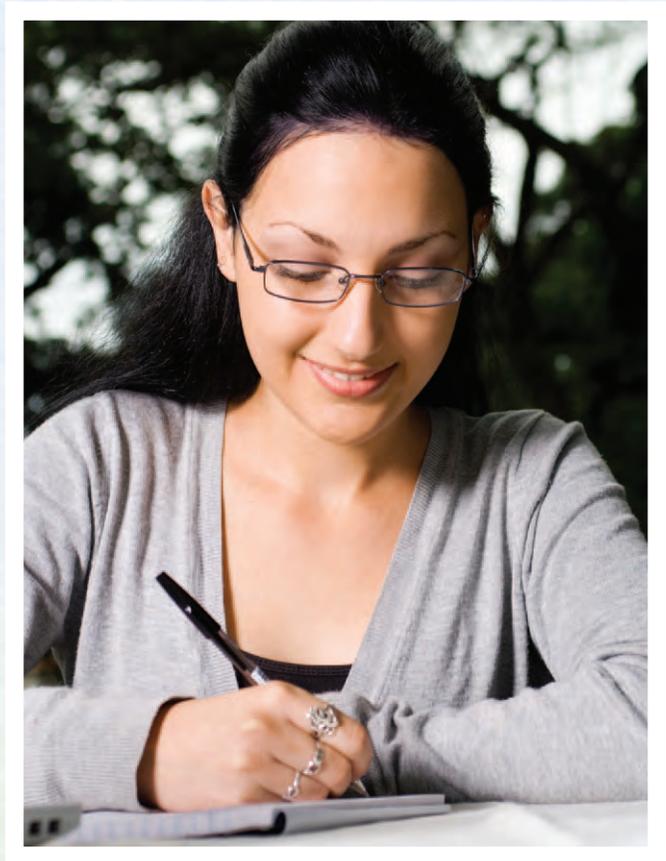
Talk to your family about donating LIFE.

Lifesharing | 
A Donate Life Organization

*A division of the University of California San Diego
A non-profit 501(c)3 organization*

3465 Camino Del Rio South, Suite 410
San Diego, CA 92108
P: 619-521-1983 | F: 619-521-2833
www.lifesharing.org

Writing to Donor Families



Lifesharing | 
A Donate Life Organization

Writing to the Donor Family

The decision to write to the family of your donor (donor family) is a very personal one.

It may help you to know that donor families consistently express appreciation for the letters or cards that they receive from recipients and their families. Some transplant recipients choose to write to their donor family and others do not.



If you would like to write to the donor family, you may send a greeting card or a letter. The following suggested guidelines may assist you in deciding what types of information to include.

Suggested Guidelines

Talk About Yourself

- Include your first name only
- The state in which you live
- Your job or occupation
- Hobbies or interests
- Your family situation such as marital status, children or grandchildren (do not include last names)
- Since religion of the donor family is unknown, please consider that your faith may differ from that of the donor family

How to Talk About Your Transplant Experience

- Use simple language.
- Recognize the donor family and thank them for their gift.
- Describe how long you waited for a transplant. What was the wait like for you and your family?
- Explain how the transplant has improved your health and changed your life. Can you participate in activities now that you couldn't before your transplant?
- Explain what has happened in your life since your transplant. Did you celebrate another birthday? Did your son or daughter get married? Did you become a parent or a grandparent? Did you return to school or work?

Closing Your Card or Letter

- Sign your first name only.
- Do not reveal your address or phone number.
- Do not reveal the name of the hospital where you received your transplant or your physicians' names.

Mailing Your Card or Letter

Send written correspondence to your transplant coordinator at the transplant center. The transplant center will forward it to Lifesharing. A transplant coordinator from Lifesharing will review it to ensure confidentiality and will then mail your correspondence to the donor family.

- Place it in an unsealed envelope.
- Include in the envelope on a separate piece of paper:
 - Your full name
 - The date of your transplant

Allow Extra Mailing Time

Since your card or letter must be mailed to the transplant center first, and then forwarded to Lifesharing, please allow extra time for it to reach the donor family. It may take a few weeks for the donor family to receive it.