



Writing to Donor Families

Most of our donor families take great comfort knowing that their loved one helped others and they look forward to hearing from recipients. Still, some transplant recipients have told us that they struggle to find the “right words” to express their gratitude. The best advice is to speak from the heart, and tell the family how much you appreciate the gift that their loved one has given.

Identities are kept confidential to protect the privacy of both recipient and donor family. Your card or letter must be mailed to your transplant coordinator. It may take several weeks before the donor family receives your letter.

Tips for the letter writing process:

- Begin the letter when you are feeling positive
- Offer sincere condolences on the loss of their loved one
- Describe how the transplant changed your life and how much you appreciate their loved one’s gift.
- Use simple language. Avoid detailed medical information or complex terms.
- **Use first names only** to ensure confidentiality.
- To further ensure confidentiality, do not share the name of your surgeon or transplant center.
- It’s OK to offer general information about yourself and your family (hobbies, interests).

The decision to write to the family of your donor is a very personal one. It may take time before you’re ready to write such a letter — please know that there is no time limit for sending correspondence. Just keep in mind, it may be difficult to locate family members if several years have passed.

It’s possible that you may not hear back from the donor family. If the letter is unable to be delivered to the donor family for any reason, Lifesharing will communicate this with your transplant coordinator.

Questions:

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your transplant coordinator.

Mailing your letter:

Please send your correspondence and contact information to your transplant center.



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