



Health Facts for You



Preparing for your
living liver donor evaluation

UWHealth

Welcome to the UW Health Living Donor Program. The team takes pride in building a care plan tailored to your needs. We are committed to your success. UW Health is a national and international leader in the field of transplantation.

The Liver

It is good to have basic knowledge of how the liver works. The liver is part of the digestive system. It is the largest organ in the body. It has more than 500 functions, all of which are needed for life. Some of these functions include:

- Breaking down fats, storing nutrients, and making protein,
- Cleaning poisons and waste from the body,
- Fighting infections, and
- Blood clotting.

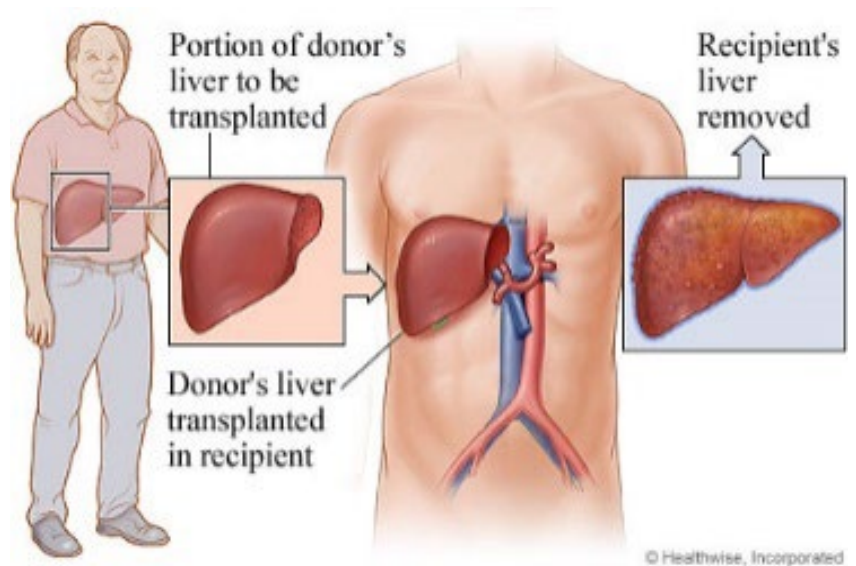
What is living liver donation?

Living liver donation happens when you give part of your liver to someone who has a liver that is not working. During the surgery, part of your liver is removed and placed into the body of the recipient whose own liver was removed. Both your liver and the recipient's liver grow to the correct size within months. You and the recipient can live well during this time. The goal is for you and your recipient to return to your regular lives after donation.

Before Your Donor Evaluation

Before your evaluation, a number of things must be done. Before a visit can be scheduled, you must:

- Go to <http://uwhealth.org/canibeadonor> to complete the liver donor inquiry form
- Talk with the independent live donor advocate to discuss donation
- Talk with a Transplant Donor Coordinator to review your history
- Complete required screening tests:
 - Mammogram
 - Colonoscopy
 - Pap
 - PSA
 - Dental Exam
- All records of above testing must be available to UW Health



Donor Evaluation Visit

On average, a liver donor evaluation visit takes 7-8 hours. It is meant to provide the team with a complete overview of your health. We encourage you to have a support person with you during the visit.

During the visit you will need blood work and other imaging tests or procedures. General health testing will be needed before approval to donate.

What to Bring to Your Donor Evaluation

<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation letter with itinerary and directions
<input type="checkbox"/> A person you have identified for support, if you would like.
<input type="checkbox"/> A list of questions you or your support person have for the transplant team.
<input type="checkbox"/> A light jacket/sweater for comfort
<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of Advance Directives if you have them filled out
<input type="checkbox"/> Snacks/sack lunch
<input type="checkbox"/> Something to do (tablet, book, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/> A list of your current medicines or supplements and pill bottles. This list should include doses and why you take them.

The Donation Process

Evaluation

- In order to make sure donation is the best option, you will:
 - Meet with the donor team.
 - Have tests and labs done.
- This phase can take days, weeks or months.
- When your evaluation is done, your case will be discussed with the Transplant team to make sure you are healthy enough to donate. You will receive a phone call from the donor coordinator with the plan.

Waiting for Your Donation

- This phase can last weeks or months.
- If you are donating directly to your recipient, surgery can be scheduled when both you and the recipient are approved.

Surgery

- You will donate your organ and recover in the hospital.
- You will learn about after-surgery care.
- You will be in the hospital for 1-3 days.

Follow-up

- This phase starts when you leave the hospital. It lasts the rest of your life.
 - Lab tests and follow-up care are needed.
 - The donor team will support you long-term, so you can lead a normal, active, and healthy life.
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Donor Team Members

Transplant Surgeons

Transplant surgeons may meet with you and your family during the evaluation. They review your record and test results and explain the surgery. They review the risks and benefits of donation. The surgeon does the surgery and works with other doctors to manage your care after the donation.

Transplant Medical Doctor

These doctors help to decide if a donation is the best option for you. They may be involved with your care after the donation.

Donor Coordinators

These nurses coordinate your care before and after donation. They are involved from the time of the first referral until your 2-year follow-up is complete. They will also be there for you for any long-term donation problems. They arrange any tests needed. These nurses help you through the donation journey. They contact your local doctors and other healthcare facilities as needed. They teach you and your family and advocate for you.

Donor Social Workers

A transplant social worker will meet with you at your evaluation. They will talk with you about your support systems, time off of work, your drug/alcohol use, mental health, and how you cope. These questions help them learn more about your needs before the donation. They can assist in financial concerns related to donation and donor resources. They can also help you complete advance directives if needed. Social workers are available for support during your donation journey.

Clinical Dietitians

Clinical dietitians assess your nutritional status and your exercise routine. They help you to make a plan for good nutrition and exercise.

Physician Assistants (PAs) and Nurse Practitioners (NPs)

These advanced practice providers care for you before and after your donation. They check on you as you recover and help to manage your medicines. They also help to plan for your discharge needs. You will see them in transplant clinic before and after your surgery.

Surgical Residents and Transplant Fellows

These doctors mainly assist with hospital care. This includes getting you ready for and helping with surgery. They help to manage issues after surgery and prepare you for discharge. You may also see transplant fellows at transplant clinic visits.

Transplant Pharmacists

Pharmacists work with the team to make sure the medicines are used correctly. They watch for side effects and try to minimize them. They also help to manage the timing of the medicines.

Inpatient Transplant Nurses

These nurses care for you in the hospital. You will have a primary nurse. This nurse works with the rest of the team to get you ready for discharge.

Case Managers

Case managers focus on the plan for leaving the hospital. The case managers can help arrange outpatient care needs.

Transplant Clinic Nurses

These nurses care for you during clinic visits. They provide care and support for you after procedures. They arrange follow-up care and provide education.

Office Support Staff

Support staff answer your phone calls and work with the coordinators and other staff. They help coordinators to manage lab results and patient issues and concerns.

Spiritual Care

Chaplains help people find comfort and meaning from their faith during surgery recovery. Our chaplains provide spiritual and emotional support. They also perform sacraments. Faith and medicine offerings are provided in the hospital chapel.

Other Experts

Other doctors may be involved either during the evaluation or after donation. UW Health has many specialized team members who work with the rest of your team. Health psychology, cardiology, endocrine, and urology are just a few of the teams that can assist in your care if needed.

Other Services

Other services are available to help you and your family. For example, Interpreter Services help those who need translation. Housing assistance can help if you need short-term housing.

Financial Planning

UW Health pays the fees related to the living donor evaluation.

The recipient's insurance will pay for surgery fees.



Donors will pay for their own travel expenses, including food, gas, and hotel. A donor will need time off from work and may not have paid leave for this use. Resources are available to offset the cost of travel, lodging, child and elder care costs and lost wages. There may also be tax benefits for you as a donor. You will receive information about these benefits at your evaluation.

Tips for Talking with Your Health Care Provider

You and your health care team are working toward the same goal - good health for you. Talk together about your health and any problems you may have. Here are a few tips to make the most of your time together.

Use clinic and hospital visits to learn how to best care for yourself. Ask questions. Practice new skills. Get advice about what might work best for you.

Be a partner in making decisions. Ask about your options. Find out about pros and cons of any decision. Plan your care with the health care team and others who support you.

When you make an appointment, ask if you need any tests before you come in. You may need to wait to eat or drink until after a test is done. Ask if you can do the test before your appointment. You may be able to get the results during your clinic visit.

Prepare for your visit. Think about the reason for your clinic visit. Write down what you want to tell your provider and any questions you have. Ask the person who comes with you to help keep track of questions and answers.



Listen carefully. If you don't understand, ask questions. Ask for more information if you need it. Take notes or ask for a written sheet if this would help you. Ask your health care provider:



- What your health problem is
- What caused it
- What you should do about your health problem
- When it will improve
- If you need a follow-up visit

Make sure you know and agree with the plan.

- Repeat what you have heard to make sure you understand what was said.
- Make sure the instructions are right for you. If they aren't, tell your provider. The plan can be changed to better meet your needs.
- Understand side effects and what to expect from any new medicines.
- Find out who to call for questions after you go home.
- Take your after-visit summary sheet at the end of a clinic visit. You can also find it in MyChart.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright ©1/2024. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#8329