

LifeNet Health, Virginia's organ procurement organization, works with donor families who have generously consented to donate the organs and tissues of a loved one.



Often, donor families and transplant recipients find comfort in hearing from each other. A simple card, note, or letter can be uplifting to a recipient and reassure a donor family that they made a wonderful decision to help others in the midst of their grief.

Allow yourself extra mailing time.

LifeNet Health Donor Family Services will review your card or letter first to ensure confidentiality and then forward it to the clinical transplant coordinator at the transplant center. The transplant center will then send it to the recipients.

Since your card or letter must be mailed to LifeNet Health first, and then forwarded, please allow extra time for it to reach the transplant recipient(s).

Therefore, it may take a few weeks from the time you mail your letter for the recipient(s) to receive it.

We thank you for your decision to help others by sharing the gift of life.



Writing to Transplant Recipients & Their Families



Have you ever wondered how you could share your feelings with the recipients of your loved one's organs?

Do You Wish to Correspond with the Recipients of Your Loved One's Organs?

Here's how:

1

Please address your correspondence to "transplant recipient(s)" (specify which organs)

2

Identify yourself only as a donor family.

3

On another sheet of paper, please write your name, the donor's name and the date of the donation so that we will know which transplant recipient to send it to. This will not be sent with your correspondence.

4

Mail to: LifeNet Health
5809 Ward Court
Virginia Beach, VA 23455
Attention: Donor Family Services

5

LifeNet Health will mail it to the transplant center, who will forward the letter to the transplant recipient(s). All confidentiality will be maintained.

Some information you may want to include:

Talk about yourself and your loved one:

- Your/their job or occupation.
- Your family situation (spouse, children, grandchildren).
- Your/their hobbies or interests.
- The state in which you live.
- Describe your loved one - what kind of person was he/she? Did he/she work, have children, etc.
- Since the religion of the recipient's family is unknown, please consider this when making religious comments.

Talk about your donation experience:

- Use simple language.
- Explain how the donation has helped you deal with your loss.
- Explain what has happened in your life since the donation.

Closing your card or letter:

- Sign your first name only.
- Do not reveal your address, city, phone number, or name of the hospital where your loved one died.



Will I hear from the transplant recipients?

You may or may not hear from them. Many transplant recipients would be thrilled to receive correspondence from their donor family. Others are overwhelmed with emotion and have difficulty expressing their gratitude.

Some transplant recipients, even though they are grateful for the donation, prefer not to write to their donor family. They may not be able to express their feelings. Remember, just as some donor families prefer to remain private, so do some transplant recipients.

Everyone handles traumatic experiences in their lives differently. Some are able to be open and share their feelings, while others may not be able to touch the emotional pain they suffer.

It may take several months or even years before a recipient feels comfortable writing to their donor family. Keep these comments in mind and remember to communicate in a sensitive manner.