

WHILE YOU ARE WAITING

FALL 2006; EDITION 1

Welcome to the first edition of WHILE YOU ARE WAITING. This newsletter will be published bi annually in the Fall and Spring for all of our patients anxiously waiting for a kidney transplant. We hope that this publication will answer common questions that may arise, provide new information regarding kidney transplant, and refresh important items that were discussed during the initial transplant evaluation. We hope that this newsletter will help those waiting feel a little more 'connected' with our Transplant Department. We understand this is a stressful time for those waiting as well as for family and friends.

DID YOU KNOW?

- ❖ Currently there are over 67,000 people waiting for a kidney transplant nationwide.
- ❖ The average waiting time (which means individual waiting times can be shorter or longer) for a kidney transplant at the University of Wisconsin Hospital according to blood type is:
 - A blood type-1 $\frac{1}{2}$ years
 - B blood type- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ years
 - O blood type- 3 years
 - AB blood type- 6 months
- ❖ A living donor kidney can come from either a related or un-related person.
- ❖ The monthly blood sample that you send to our Transplant Laboratory helps to identify antibodies in your blood. This allows us to check every patient on the waiting list with each potential kidney donor. This helps identify a match quickly.
- ❖ When a phone call is placed to a potential kidney transplant recipient telling them that a potential kidney is available, the patient will be asked to leave their home within an hour of receiving the phone call and come to our Transplant Center.

PLEASE REMEMBER....

- ❖ ...to check with your dialysis unit or physician's office to be sure the monthly blood sample is being drawn for our Transplant Center
- ❖to update your transplant coordinator with ANY changes in your address and/or phone numbers. We need to be able to reach you any time of the day or night.
- ❖to update our financial coordinator if you have had ANY changes in your insurance coverage.
- ❖ ...call your transplant coordinator with changes in your health.
- ❖ ...to have any medical information, such as tests, discharge summaries from hospitalizations, etc... faxed to your transplant coordinator
- ❖ ...to NEVER assume that your medical records are sent to the Transplant Coordinator when requested. ALWAYS make a follow up phone call to your transplant coordinator to assure records are transferred.
- ❖ ...if you receive a blood transfusion to be sure it is leukopoor blood to avoid developing antibodies.
- ❖ ...to notify your transplant coordinator if you have received a blood transfusion.

A NOTE FROM OUR SOCIAL WORKERS

Our social work team is available as a resource to patients before and after a transplant takes place. A social worker meets with all patients as a part the evaluation appointment. Our role is to help plan for the changes that take place in a patient's life as a result of transplantation, such as family relationships, employment status, financial situations, etc. We also encourage patients to complete an Advance Directive during this time of waiting, so that the health care team knows the patient's wishes and can carry them out. Please call the general office phone number and ask to be connected to one of the four social workers if you would like to discuss any of these issues. We look forward to addressing other topics of interest to you in future newsletters.

BE PREPARED FOR YOUR PHONE CALL FOR TRANSPLANT!

- ❖ What to remember to pack
 - ❖ Loose fitting clothes (ie. Elastic waist pants/shorts, t-shirts)
 - ❖ Non-skid slippers with closed toes
 - ❖ Your **complete** medication list and pill bottles
 - ❖ Dialysis supplies to get through 24 hours if on Peritoneal Dialysis
 - ❖ Personal Toiletries
 - ❖ Your insurance cards
 - ❖ Phone card and/or cell phone
 - ❖ List of your physicians/health care providers and their phone numbers/addresses
- ❖ Keep your cell phone on and charged at all times
- ❖ Keep in mind that at the time of discharge, depending on your insurance, you may need to pay for a one month supply of medication. Be prepared for this potential expense and think ahead about how you will pay for it.
- ❖ If you live a distance from our Transplant Center, have a plan in place for transportation that will be available to you at any time of the day or night.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS TO KEEP HANDY

(CUT HERE)

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN HOSPITAL TRANSPLANT DEPARTMENT

MY COORDINATOR'S NAME _____

MY COORDINATOR'S PHONE NUMBER (608) _____

GENERAL PHONE NUMBER 608-263-1384

FINANCIAL COUNSELOR 608-263-1503

FAX NUMBER 608-262-5624