

# WHILE YOU ARE WAITING

FALL 2007; EDITION 3



We are well into the Fall Season and Winter is right around the corner! Time again for an update for those waiting for a kidney transplant. Our staff hopes that this newsletter finds you doing well. This bi-annual communication is published specifically for our patients waiting for a kidney transplant. Our goal is to provide information and reminders that are helping in your preparation for your future kidney transplant. Warm wishes to you during this Holiday Season from our Transplant Office!

## DID YOU KNOW?

- ❖ The kidneys are a pair of reddish-brown organs located on either side of the spine just below the diaphragm, behind the liver and stomach. They are bean-shaped and measure about 4 and one half inches long, 2 and one half inches wide, and 1 inch thick. The primary function of the kidneys is to remove waste from the body through the production of urine. They also help to regulate blood pressure, blood volume, and the chemical (electrolyte) composition of the blood.
- ❖ As of this month, there are...
  - 98,017 people in the United States waiting for a transplant-this includes all solid organ transplant types (ie-lung, liver, etc...)?
  - 73,989 people in the United States waiting for a kidney transplant?
  - 1,133 people waiting for a kidney transplant in just the state of Wisconsin?
- ❖ The average waiting times for a kidney transplant at the University of Wisconsin Hospital according to blood type are:
  - A blood type- 240 days
  - B blood type- 730 days
  - O blood type- 650 days
  - AB blood type- 160 days

\*Keep in mind that waiting time may vary greatly based on a patient's antibody level
- ❖ Our Transplant Office employs: 28 Nurse Transplant Coordinators, 4 Social Workers, 1 Nutritionist, 2 Financial Advisors, and 17 Secretarial Assistants. Our office services those patients who have been evaluated, listed or have received a kidney, pancreas or liver transplant.



## BE PREPARED FOR YOUR PHONE CALL FOR TRANSPLANT!

- ❖ What to remember to pack
  - ❖ Driving Directions
  - ❖ Loose fitting clothes (ie. Elastic waist pants/shorts, t-shirts)
  - ❖ Non-skid slippers or shoes 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/pharmacy and their phone numbers/addresses
- ❖ Keep your pager/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.

### PLEASE REMEMBER...

- ❖ ...if you have a potential living related or unrelated donor option, please pursue this avenue; our organ shortage worsens every day. If you have questions about how to ask someone to consider live donation, please contact your transplant coordinator or our transplant social workers.
- ❖ ...if you receive a blood transfusion, be sure that the blood is filtered to avoid developing antibodies.
- ❖ ...if you live a distance away from our Transplant Center, have your travel plans mapped out. You may Mapquest your address to ours at 600 Highland Avenue/Madison, Wisconsin 53972 via the internet.
- ❖ ...if your travel plans to our hospital include air travel, please have flight schedules available and charter pilots on call 24/7.
- ❖ ...to check with your dialysis unit (or nephrologist's office, if you are not on dialysis) to assure that they are sending your monthly blood sample to our UW laboratory.
- ❖ ...notify your transplant coordinator with **any** changes in your phone numbers, addresses, insurance, or health status.
- ❖ ...call your coordinator to update your health maintenance records on a yearly basis these tests include: mammograms (over 40 years of age) and pap smears for women and PSA blood tests for men. A yearly history and physical should also be done for all patients on the waiting list.
- ❖ ...the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) provides a toll-free patient services line to help transplant candidates, recipients, and family members understand organ allocation practices and transplantation data. You may also call this number to discuss a problem you may be experiencing with your transplant center or the transplantation system in general. The toll-free patient services line number is 1-888-894-6361.

## A NOTE FROM OUR SOCIAL WORKERS:

The internet can be a nice way to "dip your feet" into getting ready for transplant, especially if you live in a rural area where connecting with others on a transplant waitlist may be difficult. You can learn more about specific topics that interest you, and read about individuals' experiences.

In addition to University of Wisconsin Hospital's website ([uwhealth.org](http://uwhealth.org)), which obviously we recommend, helpful places to learn more about transplant include:

### [kidneyschool.org](http://kidneyschool.org)

- A series of educational modules on different kidney-disease topics.

### [aakp.org](http://aakp.org)

- American Association of Kidney Patients-- Non-profit that assists patients in learning more and in becoming active participants in planning/ managing treatment. Focus on rehabilitation, lobbying and emotional support.

### [www.transweb.org](http://www.transweb.org)

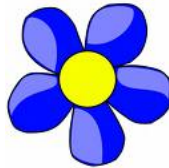
- A nonprofit aimed especially at young people facing transplant.

### [www.transplantexperience.com](http://www.transplantexperience.com)

- Created to meet your specific needs throughout the transplant process

### [rsnhope.org](http://rsnhope.org)

- Renal Support Network focuses on offering materials and activities that will help improve the lives of those affected by kidney disease



## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS TO KEEP HANDY

(CUT HERE)

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**UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN HOSPITAL TRANSPLANT DEPARTMENT**

**MY COORDINATOR'S NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**MY COORDINATOR'S PHONE NUMBER (608)** \_\_\_\_\_

**GENERAL TRANSPLANT OFFICE PHONE NUMBER**                      608-263-1384

**TRANSPLANT OFFICE FAX NUMBER**                                      608-262-5624

**FINANCIAL COUNSELOR/INSURANCE QUESTIONS**                      608-263-1503