

Guidelines for Writing to Your Donor or Recipient in a Kidney Paired Exchange

If you have participated in a kidney paired exchange—either as a donor or recipient—you may choose to write to your match. This is a personal decision and can be made at any time after your transplant.

Many recipients write to express gratitude, and donors often appreciate hearing how their gift has impacted someone's life. Both donors and recipients frequently find it uplifting to learn more about the person they helped or received help from.

How to Write Your Letter

You may write a physical letter or create a PDF to send electronically. Here are some tips to help you get started:

- Share a little about yourself: your age, occupation, and interests.
- Mention how long you waited for your transplant.
- Describe how your health has improved and how your life has changed.
 - For example: Have you celebrated a major life event? Returned to work or school? Reconnected with family or hobbies?
- Use **first names only** to protect your privacy.
- For donors: Share your motivation or story behind your decision to donate.

What to Avoid

To ensure your message is respectful and appropriate, please avoid:

- Pressuring to meet or write back.
 - Language that may cause feelings of obligation or indebtedness.
 - Sensitive topics such as religion or politics.
 - Hate speech or abusive language.
 - Sharing personal details like your last name, address, or workplace.
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How to Send Your Letter

If Sending a Physical Letter:

1. Place your card or letter in an **unsealed, unstamped envelope**.
2. On a separate sheet, include your **name** and **date of transplant**.
3. Place both items in a larger envelope and mail it to your **transplant center**.

If Sending an Electronic Letter:

- You may identify yourself and your transplant date in your email and attach your letter as a **PDF**. Send it to your transplant center.
 - Some transplant centers accept letters via secure systems like **MyChart** — check with your transplant team for details.
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Review Process

Your transplant center will review your letter to ensure it is appropriate and supportive. If revisions are needed, you'll have the opportunity to make changes and resubmit.

Forwarding to the Donor

The donor's transplant center will confirm whether they are open to receiving correspondence. If they are not, you will be notified. They may choose to receive it in the future. Please note that each transplant center has its own process, and if your matched person is at a different center, it may take additional time.

Receiving a Response

Some people may choose to respond, while others may not. Please be prepared for either outcome. If they do not respond or decline correspondence, it is not a reflection of you — everyone processes this experience differently.

Sample Letter to a Living Donor

Dear Donor,

I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the incredible gift you've given me. Your generosity has made a life-changing difference, and I'm truly grateful.

My name is James, and I'm 47 years old. I work as a mechanic and enjoy spending time with my family, fishing, and watching football. Before my transplant, I was on dialysis for nearly three years. It was a tough journey, and I often wondered what the future would hold.

Since receiving the transplant, my health has improved dramatically. I have more energy, fewer limitations, and a renewed sense of hope. I recently celebrated my son's wedding and was able to walk him down the aisle — something I wasn't sure I'd be able to do. I've also returned to work and am enjoying the simple things again, like weekend outings and family dinners.

Your decision to donate has given me a second chance at life, and I will always carry that with me. Thank you for your kindness, courage, and your selflessness.

With sincere appreciation,

Your Recipient

Sample Letter to a Recipient

Dear Recipient,

I'd like to share a bit about myself. I chose to donate because [briefly share your story]. I'm doing well after the donation and hope you are thriving. Wishing you continued health and happiness.

Sincerely,

Your Donor