



The Gift of Life 2: Surviving the Waiting List and Liver Transplantation

Parichehr Yomtoob, Laura Yomtoob, Deborah Wepler

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Seventeen years after a successful liver transplant, David Yomtoob once again found himself fighting for his life against the backdrop of organ waiting lists and a valiant team of doctors and nurses working to keep him alive while he waited.

Only 12 years old when his first liver failed with advanced Wilson's disease, David was among the first to receive a transplanted liver in 1981. He led a normal life when suddenly, 17 years later, that liver began to fail. Three years and four transplants centers later, David arrived home again with a new liver, but only after he and his family had been tested by the challenges faced by every transplant family on the waiting list.


According to the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), nearly 90,000 people are waiting for donated organs today and every 13 minutes a new name is added to the list. Every 13 minutes another family's life is thrown into turmoil as they begin the waiting process with the hope that their journey will end in life and not in death.

As each patient's name is added to the waiting list, a number of unforeseen challenges await. *The Gift of Life 2* was written to assist patients and their families in managing those challenges: Which transplant center is best for the patient? How does the waiting list work? How does a patient communicate with medical personnel most effectively to manage their treatment? Who is the best candidate to be a living related organ donor? What are the various religious positions on organ donation and transplantation? Where does one find financial, emotional, and spiritual support during the waiting period? How can a layperson understand the medical tests? What can go wrong? Most importantly, how can a loved one be kept alive long enough to receive a transplant?

Parichehr Yomtoob, David's mother and the co-author (with Ted Schwarz) in 1986 of *The Gift of Life*, the story of David's first transplant, is an activist and educator for organ donation and transplantation. She has co-authored *The Gift of Life 2* with her daughter-in-law Laura Yomtoob and Deborah Wepler, one of our country's most experienced transplant nurses. Between them, they answer all of the questions patients and their families will have before, during, and after transplantation.

This book gives inspiration and purpose to those awaiting transplant, as well as those contemplating organ donation. It will also provide valuable insights to doctors, medical students, nurses, and other hospital personnel, along with members of the clergy, and the families and friends of transplant patients.

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