

Will MY DONOR FAMILY WRITE BACK?

Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that you will receive a response from your donor family.

Just as writing to your donor family is a deeply personal decision, so is the donor family's decision about whether or not they write to their loved one's recipients. Some donor families have said that writing about their loved one and their decision to donate helps them in their grief journey. Other families may not be ready to write to their loved one's recipients.

Either way, your written correspondence to your donor family is a unique opportunity to thank them for their decision to donate.

Donor families have shared that donation is often the only positive to come from the death of their loved one. Your card or letter reaffirms to them that donation saves lives and that their gift was truly appreciated.

If you need further assistance writing to your donor family, please call LifeSource at **612.800.6100** or toll-free at **1.888.536.6283**.

LifeSource

ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION

2225 West River Road North
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Writing
TO DONOR FAMILIES

Deciding TO WRITE

The decision to write to your donor family is a very personal one. You may choose to write at any time after your transplant; there is no required “waiting period.”

Transplant recipients often choose to write to their donor families to express their gratitude. Many donor families have said a card or personal note from their loved one’s recipient offers comfort.

LifeSource is a non-profit organization dedicated to saving lives through organ and tissue donation in the Upper Midwest. LifeSource serves communities in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and portions of western Wisconsin. In caring for donor families, LifeSource supports written correspondence between transplant recipients and donor families. All correspondence is completely anonymous and identities are kept confidential.

If you write to your donor family, you may send a greeting card, letter or photos. You may use the following suggestions as a guide to help you with your correspondence.

TALK ABOUT YOURSELF

- Please include your first name only
- The state (not the city) in which you live
- Your job or occupation
- Your hobbies or interests
- Your family situation, such as marital status, children or grandchildren (please do not include last names)

TALK ABOUT YOUR TRANSPLANT EXPERIENCE

- Use simple language; refrain from using too much medical terminology
- Recognize the donor family and thank them for their gift
- Describe how long you waited for a transplant
- Share what the wait was like for you and your family
- Explain how the transplant has improved your health and changed your life

Explain what has happened in your life since your transplant. For example...

- Did you celebrate another birthday?
- Did your son or daughter marry?
- Did you become a parent or grandparent?
- Did you return to school or accept a new job?

USE CAUTION

- Since the religion of the donor’s family is unknown, please consider this if you are thinking about including religious comments
- Avoid referring to your transplanted organ by a nickname

Closing YOUR LETTER

- Please sign your first name only
- Please do not reveal your address, city, phone number or e-mail address
- Please do not reveal the name or location of your hospital or physician

Mailing YOUR LETTER

Place your card or letter in an unsealed, unstamped envelope. Be sure to include your full name and date of transplant on a separate piece of paper. Please place these items into another envelope and mail them to your transplant center. The transplant center staff will forward it to LifeSource.

A LifeSource Donor Family Advocate will review your card or letter to ensure confidentiality, and will then mail it to your donor family.

ALLOW EXTRA TIME

Since your card or letter must be mailed to the transplant center and then forwarded to LifeSource, please allow extra time for it to reach your donor family. It may take several weeks after you’ve mailed it for the family to receive it.