

# Crafting Your Story



When conducting living donor outreach, the focus should be on sharing your medical need and giving others the opportunity to respond if they feel called to help. Like most stories, there should be a beginning, middle, and end. Below is an outline of our recommended content, along with examples. A generic sample letter is provided on the next page for your reference.

## BEGINNING

### WHAT TO INCLUDE

- Medical situation
- Doctor-recommended living donor transplant
- Intention to get the word out
- Some personal details if you feel comfortable

### EXAMPLES

"I have chronic kidney disease" "My kidneys are failing"  
"I have end stage kidney disease"  
"I have to go to the hospital three times a week for hemodialysis"  
"I have to do peritoneal dialysis everyday"  
"My doctor recommended I consider a living kidney donor transplant"  
"I wanted to start talking about it to get the word out"  
"It is hard for me to talk about but as a parent of two kids, I want to make sure I am around for them"  
"I miss being able to be active outdoors, and I hope that if I get a transplant I will be able to get active again"

## MIDDLE

### WHAT TO INCLUDE

- Be upfront with your concerns in doing donor outreach
- Provide reassurance that
  - it is confidential
  - it won't impact your relationship
  - it is not the right decision for everyone, etc.

### EXAMPLES

"I don't want anyone to feel pressure to donate"  
"I understand that donation is not the right fit for everyone"  
"Our relationship will not be impacted either way"  
"The process is confidential so I won't know anything unless you tell me"

## END

### WHAT TO INCLUDE

- Explain that those seeking more information or interested in donating should contact the donor centre
- Provide the contact information for your donor centre

### EXAMPLES

"If someone wants to learn more they can call # \_\_\_\_\_"  
"If someone is interested in donating they can call # \_\_\_\_\_"  
"If you are willing, please share my story with others"

# Sample Donor Outreach Letter

This is an example of a letter you could use to help get the word out that you are looking for a kidney donor. Feel free to change the wording, and only include the contact information for the transplant hospital that applies to you.

Dear Family and Friends,

I'm writing to let you know about my medical situation and this is a difficult letter to write. My kidneys are failing and my doctors have recommended a kidney transplant as the best medical treatment. I have been told to try to find someone who may be willing to donate a kidney to me, so I am getting the word out in case someone may consider coming forward as a potential donor.

I want to be clear that I would only want a donor who does not feel any pressure to donate. If the idea of donation is not comfortable for you, I understand and respect that, and it won't affect our relationship in any way.

I know this is a very personal decision and there is a lot to consider. I've learned that kidney donors can live a normal and healthy life with just one kidney, and donors don't have to be related or be the same blood type in order to donate. Donors are carefully screened to make sure it is safe for them to donate and it is all done privately, by a separate donor team. It will all be confidential, and I will not know anything, unless the donor chooses to tell me.

If you would like to learn more about living donation, you can get more information from the donor nurse coordinator at St. Paul's Hospital (604 806 9027/ 1-877-922-9822; [DonorNurse@providencehealth.bc.ca](mailto:DonorNurse@providencehealth.bc.ca)) or Vancouver General Hospital (ph: 604 875-5182/ 1-855-875-5182; [kidneydonornurse@vch.ca](mailto:kidneydonornurse@vch.ca)) or on the BC Transplant website ([www.transplant.bc.ca](http://www.transplant.bc.ca)). All information is private and confidential and any potential donor can make the choice to back away from the process at any point.

If donation is not for you, that is fine, and please consider spreading the word in case someone else might want to find out more.

Thank you!

*\*Special thanks to Transplant First Initiative members for contributing content to this document.*