

Living Donor Liver Transplant Evaluation Summary

Part One: Meeting with the Multidisciplinary Team

LIVING DONOR SPECIALIST - DARBY SANTAMOUR-SAAB



In addition to Darby's role of initially screening and educating our patients on living liver donation, she also facilitates the donor through their evaluation and testing. She is available to our donors throughout the process should they need anything. Once a donor has been approved for surgery she manages their pre-operative appointments, surgery dates and their follow up care.

NURSE TRANSPLANT COORDINATOR - FRANCESCA PIRANDELLO



Francesca's role is to educate our donors on liver transplantation, and donation. She will also review the Informed Consent and answer any questions before it is signed.



FINANCIAL COORDINATOR - JENNIFER FOJAS



Jennifer's role is to explain how the donor's evaluation, surgery, hospitalization and follow up are billed and paid. She will explain what a donor can expect their out-of-pocket expenses to be, when their insurance may be used and what financial assistance options are available. Jennifer will also explain how donation may impact a donor's ability to obtain health and/or life insurance.

PSYCHIATRIST - DR. ANNA SALAJEGHEH



Donors are required to bring a care partner with them to this appointment. (The care partner is the person they have designated to support them through this process but ultimately, this is the individual who will help care for the donor when they are discharged from the hospital). Dr. Salajegheh's role is to help the donor understand the risks and benefits of liver donation. Donation can be emotionally stressful and a donor may become depressed, anxious or overwhelmed during the surgical procedures and recovery. Dr. Salajegheh will assess their ability to handle the process and work with the potential donor to help them decide if donation is the best decision for them. She will also prepare the care partner for the tasks involved in their role.



SOCIAL WORKER - DEBORAH GINSBERG



Donors are required to bring a care partner with them to this appointment. Deborah is a social worker and a living donor advocate. She will work to understand the donor's motivation for wanting to donate. Her role is to protect the donor from being pressured into donation and make sure they understand the risks. Deborah will ensure the donors are fully informed, that they have a committed and responsible care partner, that they have the financial resources to handle out-of-pocket expenses and that they have reliable modes of transportation to make their visits. Deborah is available to our donors throughout this process to provide emotional support and arrange community resources.

INDEPENDENT PHYSICIAN - DR. EMILY TAYLOR



Dr. Taylor is the independent Physician and a Living Donor Advocate. She is a general medical doctor on the full-time faculty of Weill Cornell Medicine with a general medical practice. Dr. Taylor is an equal member of the Donor Team but not tied in any way to the Department of Transplantation. She evaluates donors from the perspective of their general medical condition and the potential effect on their future health.



DONOR HEPATOLOGIST - DR. ALYSON FOX



Dr. Fox meets with each donor to educate them on the risks of liver donation and explain the benefit of living donation for the recipient. She will perform a physical exam and review the donor's medical and family history. Dr. Fox helps to ensure the donor's liver is safe for donation.

DONOR SURGEON - DR. BENJAMIN SAMSTEIN / DR. KARIM HALAZUN



Donors will meet with either Dr. Samstein or Dr. Halazun during their evaluation. They will perform a physical exam and review the donor's medical and family history. The surgeon will educate our donors on the risks and potential complications that go along with liver donation. They will explain the surgical procedures used during the donation and transplantation, as well as what a donor will experience during their hospitalization. The surgeon will also review what is expected of the donors post-operatively regarding their recovery and follow up care.



LIVING DONOR PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT - MEAGHAN BIRCH



Meaghan is the living liver donor's PA. Her role is to care for our donors post-operatively. They will likely have their follow up appointments with Meaghan, however, she typically meets with donors during their evaluation to establish a relationship before they undergo surgery.

Part Two: Testing

BLOODWORK

IN BETWEEN APPOINTMENTS WITH THE DONOR TEAM, POTENTIAL DONORS WILL HAVE THEIR BLOODWORK DONE. THIS IS A THOROUGH SET OF LAB TESTS PERFORMED TO RULE OUT ANY MEDICAL ILLNESSES, LIVER DISEASES, CLOTTING DISORDERS, VIRAL ILLNESS AND HIV.

CHEST X-RAY

A CHEST X-RAY IS PERFORMED ON ALL DONORS TO MAKE SURE THEIR LUNGS ARE HEALTHY.

(EKG) ELECTROCARDIOGRAM

AN EKG IS PERFORMED ON ALL DONORS TO ENSURE THERE ARE NO CARDIAC ISSUES.



(MRI) MAGNETIC RESONANCE IMAGING

THE ABDOMINAL MRI IS PERFORMED ON DONORS ARE MULTIPLE REASONS. THE MRI WILL SHOW THE VASCULAR ANATOMY OF THE LIVER, ITS SIZE, HOW THE LIVER IS SPLIT AND THE PERCENTAGE OF FAT (STEATOSIS). THIS INFORMATION HELPS THE SURGEON DETERMINE IF THE LIVER IS APPROPRAITE FOR DONATION, WHICH LOBE WILL BE DONATED AND IF A LAPAROSCOPIC APPROACH IS POSSIBLE.

ADDITIONAL TESTING

DEPENDING ON THE DONOR'S TESTING RESULTS, AND/OR MEDICAL AND FAMILY HISTORY, THE DONOR TEAM MAY DECIDE ADDITIONAL TESTING IS NECESSARY. THESE TESTS COULD RANGE FROM BLOODWORK, ECHOCARDIOGRAM, LIVER BIOPSY, OR ADDITIONAL MEDICAL CONSULTS.