

## Organ and tissue recipient

### How to write a thank you letter

#### **Why Writing a Thank You Letter to your Donor Family is important.**

Writing a letter of gratitude to the family members of your organ donor is the ultimate humbling experience. How do you even begin to say “Thank You” to someone for a gift of life? Words might not seem capable of describing how thankful you are for being given a second chance. In fact, some people find it so overwhelming that they end up not thanking the donor family at all.

At TELL we believe that with the proper amount of thoughtfulness and sincerity, a heartfelt thank you can be written, no matter how simple. It should almost not be considered a choice to write or not to write. It should just be a matter of time until you are ready to put your thoughts onto paper.

Saying thank you is as much about the writer as it is about the reader. It might not seem that way, but it benefits both parties equally. Saying thank you allows you to reflect on your journey and a reminder of how lucky you have been to receive an organ. It will also help you to put yourself in the shoes of the grieving family that said yes to organ donation in their darkest time.

Knowing first-hand how the organ recipient's life has changed and what they have been able to do since getting a transplant can help give meaning to the senselessness surrounding their loss. We believe that donor families do want to hear from their loved ones' recipients as it would be quite natural to wonder who the recipient is and how he/she is recovering from their illness.



## **Tips for writing a Thank You Letter**

However, writing a letter might not be an easy task for you. It is difficult to find a proper beginning and decide what to say. We have chatted to recipients and searched the internet... and have come up with some key points that we've listed below, which will help guide you.

1. Write your thank you letter by hand: A handwritten note immediately indicates thoughtfulness and caring, and gives it the attention it deserves.
2. Take the time to think and draft your letter before you write: An error-free letter not only looks professional but gives the reader a sense of importance.
3. Speak about your transplant experience—consider including details surrounding your wait, the surgery, and recovery.
4. Describe how the transplant has changed your life.
5. Use first names only and talk about yourself and your family.
6. Mention your occupation and any activities which you once again can enjoy.
7. Sincerity is key: Avoid exaggerations and focus on just being honest.
8. Compose a well-thought-out closure: Think about a special close that truly encapsulates the spirit of your letter.
9. Assume that the donor's family is still grieving, regardless of how much time has passed. Communicating with sensitivity is of utmost importance.

### **Information to Exclude in Your Organ Donation Thank You Letter:**

Your letter should not include any personal information which might identify you to the donor family. Do not include any last names, street addresses or cities, phone numbers, emails, or names of hospitals or physicians. This is of utmost importance so as to respect the privacy of the donor family and the recipient.

