

WRITING TO YOUR DONOR FAMILY

The decision to correspond with your donor family is a very personal one. Donor families welcome and appreciate communication. When you acknowledge the donor family's loss and express your gratitude, you confirm that their loved one's gift was meaningful.

"I don't know where to begin"

Write what you feel comfortable sharing about yourself and other family members. This may include marital status, occupation, hobbies and interests. Carefully consider whether to include religious comments because the views of your donor family are unknown.

"I want to express my gratitude for the gift of life"

You may include in your correspondence an acknowledgement of your donor family's loss and generosity of their gift, or you may simply wish to express your gratitude by signing and mailing a thank you card.

"Can I share information about my transplant experience?"

Describe your personal transplant experience using simple language; what was your life like before the transplant, how long did you wait and how it has changed your life. Share what has happened in your life since your transplant.

"Will I hear from my donor family?"

You may or may not hear from your donor family; even though they may be ready to hear from a recipient, they may not be ready to respond. Donor families have said that writing to recipients about their loved ones and their decision to donate helps with their grief and healing.

Will I be able to communicate directly with my donor family?"

Please note that correspondence is anonymous and identities are kept confidential until both the transplant recipient and donor family indicate they would like to release and/or receive the other's direct contact information. If you would like to exchange contact information with your donor family, please include your contact information at the bottom of your correspondence. A release form will be mailed to both you and your donor family to sign and return. *Until both release forms are received, any identifying features such as last name, address, photos, etc. will be removed and the letter will then forwarded.*

"Where do I mail my card and/or correspondence?"

Southwest Transplant Alliance's Family Care Coordinators are always available to answer any questions and assist you with writing your card or letter. Please allow for additional mailing time. Southwest Transplant Alliance will mail you a confirmation that we received and forwarded your correspondence or let you know, if for any reason, we are unable to forward.

Include on a separate piece of paper the following; your full name, residential and mailing address, phone number, email, date of transplant and transplant center and mail to:

**Family Care Coordinator
Southwest Transplant Alliance
5489 Blair Road
Dallas, TX 75231**