



**University of Washington Medical Center
Liver Transplant Program**

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UW Medicine

Liver Donor Champion Program

At UW Medicine we are committed to helping our liver patients, along with their family members and caregivers, successfully navigate their unique transplant journey. If you, or someone you care about, needs a liver transplant, **living donor liver transplant** may be the life-saving opportunity for getting you, or your loved-one, off the liver transplant waiting-list and on the path towards a healthier life.

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Why Do We Need Liver Donor Champions?

Finding a suitable living liver donor is not always easy. Some challenges that a liver patient might encounter include, discomfort in discussing their own medical diagnoses and complications with other people, and a fear of asking someone to consider living liver donation. The patient in need of a liver transplant may feel too overwhelmed by their own liver illness to be able to carry out the task of finding their own living liver donor.

Therefore, it is very helpful for liver transplant candidates to identify one or more people around them who are willing to become their spokesperson to advocate on their behalf. We call these individuals **Liver Donor Champions**.

What is a Liver Donor Champion?

A Liver Donor Champion is someone who knows and cares about the liver transplant candidate, who perhaps cannot be a living liver donor himself or herself, but who wants to help the patient. The Liver Donor Champion is willing and eager to learn, and volunteers to serve as an advocate on the patient's behalf. The UW Medicine Living Liver Donor Team educates the Liver Donor Champion on liver disease, liver transplantation, and provides tips on becoming an effective spokesperson for the liver patient.

What does a Liver Donor Champion Do?

The **UW Medicine Liver Donor Champion Program** trains the Liver Donor Champion to educate other people about liver disease, liver transplantation, and living liver donation. The Liver Donor Champion spreads the word about their loved-one's need for a liver transplant, and about how living liver donation saves lives. The Liver Donor Champion may even choose to explain to others why they decided to become a Liver Donor Champion. Liver Donor Champions reach out to family, friends, and acquaintances to advocate for the liver patient through social media, email, phone and video calls, letters, etc. They encourage all of their contacts to share this information to have even further-reaching effects. In these ways, the Liver Donor Champion can help find potential living liver donors for their loved-one.

Who can be a Liver Donor Champion?

Anyone can be a Liver Donor Champion. We encourage our liver patients to identify someone they can trust and rely on, such as a spouse, significant other, family member, or close friend, as their Liver Donor Champion.

What support is provided to a Liver Donor Champion?

Liver Donor Champions learn about liver disease, liver transplantation, living liver donation, and tools for advocacy through a dedicated online educational workshop. A comprehensive toolkit also provides both the liver patient and their Liver Donor Champion with resources to successfully spread the word about the patient's need for liver transplant and make progress toward trying to identify potential living liver donors.

Liver Donor Champion training includes:

- Facts about end-stage liver disease and liver transplantation
- Education about the living liver donor evaluation process
- Tips on how to identify and engage people in discussions about liver disease and living liver donation
- Advice on how to create appropriate social media content and messaging on behalf of the liver patient, along with education about the pitfalls to avoid when using social media
- Understanding and respecting privacy rules for both the liver patient and the potential donors
- Engagement in interactive question/answer session aimed at improving comfort with initiating and participating in conversations about living liver donation
- Gaining insights from a person who has gone through the experience of becoming a living liver donor

For more details about our Liver Donor Champion program please email us: liverdonorchampion@uw.edu or visit our website: uwmedicine.org/liver-donation