



**Thank you for
making organ
donation possible.**



CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF
Operation
POP
CORN



Thank you for making organ donation possible



30 years of saying thanks with Operation Popcorn

2021 marks the 30th year that BC Transplant and our volunteers thank the health professionals who make organ donation possible.

For 30 years, the delivery of festive packages of popcorn marks the kick-off to the holiday season in hospitals across BC. Starting as just a small campaign to a few hospitals when it launched, Operation Popcorn now annually involves 85 volunteers, and popcorn deliveries to 26 hospitals across the province.

Organ donation and transplant have also grown over the last 30 years. BC now supports almost triple the number of organ donors each year, with more lives saved through transplant than ever before. Today there are more than 5,600 British Columbians living with a transplant in our province.

This book is a reminder and thank you from some of the people who have been directly affected by organ donation. They are the transplant recipients whose lives have been saved, and the donors and donor families who said yes to organ donation. They all express only gratitude towards the caring professionals who have played a part in their journeys.

Many health-care professionals often only get to see the tragic side of organ donation. For 30 years, Operation Popcorn is our reminder of the people whose lives have been saved through organ donation and represent the lived impact of your hard work and dedication.

Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to organ donation.

Eric Lun - Executive Director, BC Transplant, Provincial Specialized Programs, & Clinical Policy

Ed Ferre - Provincial Operations Director

Dr. Sean Keenan - Provincial Medical Director, Organ Donation



Let's take a trip down memory lane...

Kelowna General Hospital, 2003



North Island Hospital Comox Valley, 2015



Burnaby Hospital, 2016



Richmond Hospital, 2005



Langley Memorial Hospital, 2007



BC Emergency Health Services, 2016



Abbotsford Regional Hospital, 2016

Regional Coroners Office, 2016



Kelowna General Hospital, 2016



BC Children's Hospital, 2018



Vancouver General Hospital, 2019



St. Paul's Hospital, 2017



Penticton Regional Hospital, 2017



Vancouver General Hospital, 2019



Thank you health professionals for your dedication and commitment to supporting organ donation and transplant. Because of you, our transplant community can make the most of their second chance at life.

University Hospital of Northern BC, 2019



Royal Columbian Hospital, 2019



Addison Heart recipient (2011)



Thank you for making organ donation possible. Because of people like you I was able to celebrate my 10th heart anniversary this year with a lot of epic adventures like going hiking in the backcountry, rock climbing and kayaking.
Thank you - Addison
10 yrs old



Royal Jubilee Hospital, 2019



Cindy

Kidney recipient (2008)



“Health-care staff see people at their most vulnerable. While in this state, I received efficient, kind and compassionate care. I am so thankful to the health-care staff province wide for all that they do for renal patients.”



We won a silver medal in the American Masters Games in Vancouver.



Fiona

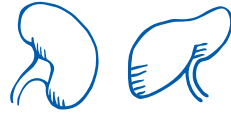
Kidney and pancreas recipient (2011)



“I have spent more hours in a hospital than I have almost anywhere else and somewhere along the lines, those walls became a second home. For me, it’s a place of understanding, triumph and a place full of familiar unknowns. These experiences are the gift my donor gave to me. As a direct result, I will bring this unique perspective and gift to the table with me, as a primary care paramedic. Being accepted into the program at The Justice Institute of BC feels like a new home and I couldn’t be more excited to help others navigate a world I’m so grateful to have been a part of. My donor saved my life and I hope to go on to save many others.”



Jaiye Kidney (2018) and liver (2000) recipient



“From the bottom of my heart, I will be forever thankful for my second chances. I will live not just for me but for my donors as well. I will hold them close to my heart forever.”



Judy Double-lung recipient (2019)



“I really don’t have the right words to thank all of the health-care staff that have looked after me over the years of my illness, during the transplant process and continuing now with maintaining a healthy life. The doctors and the staff here in Vernon have been truly awesome. They are all so dedicated and kind. In Vancouver, Dr. Yee was amazing and the whole transplant team has been unbelievably supportive throughout. I am grateful every single day.”

BC’s 500th lung transplant recipient



Ray Double-lung recipient (2017)



"Four years post double-lung transplant and still riding strong every weekend."



Vernon Jubilee Hospital, 2019



Ian Liver recipient (2011)



"This is my painting of a bear with a transplant ribbon in the heart. I'm strong and brave like a bear. I'm a transplant warrior!"



Natalie Liver recipient (2017)



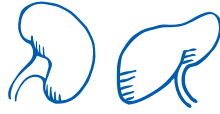
“Thank you for your dedication, kindness and courage. Your sacrifices are recognized and appreciated by so many. I wouldn’t be here, happy and healthy today without your efforts. I am forever grateful.”

Croft Kidney recipient (2001)



“I am sending my gratitude to all the health-care workers who were and are responsible for my well-being. I have paddled dragon boats with several teams in competition over the years, competed in curling, am a curling instructor and enjoy giving back. Keeping healthy and living a rewarding life is the best way I can show my thanks to the health-care providers. Thank you!”

Geoff Liver (2013) and kidney (2019) recipient



Debi Living kidney donor (2019)



“After both my liver and kidney transplants, I’m grateful to be able to give back by working with BC Transplant and my living kidney donor Debi to help raise awareness of the importance of organ donation and being a registered organ donor.”



“I am proud to call him my kidney son - he is the strongest, most determined and courageous man I know.”

Margaret Double-lung (1999) and kidney (2019) recipient



“As a double-lung transplant recipient (December 1, 2021 marks 22 years since my transplant) and also a kidney recipient (in 2019) I am so grateful for all of the health-care staff at every hospital. Without you, many lives would’ve been lost and your work during the pandemic has been extraordinary. I want to thank you from not only the bottom of my lungs and my kidney, but I’d like to thank you all from the bottom of my heart. There are just no words to express how grateful we are for all of you. Thank you for what you do every single day and Operation Popcorn is my favourite Christmas activity, because it gives us as recipients a chance to thank you personally for the great work that you do.”



Ted Lung recipient (2007)



"My husband Ted had a single lung transplant in 2007. He went from a bedridden patient to a healthy man with a future! Before transplant we had a lot of care from so many wonderful doctors and nurses as Ted prepared to leave us. Since the transplant we continue to be so grateful for amazing, ongoing care and support. We are truly grateful to family doctors, Nanaimo Regional General Hospital staff and of course Vancouver General staff and the whole BC Transplant Team. We feel so well supported and cannot begin to express how thankful we are. Thank you all for our lives!"

- Lynne, Wife of Ted

Marilyn Liver recipient (2013)



"I want to thank the health-care workers of BC with deep gratitude - the real heroes of this pandemic. They are always there for us as transplant patients and especially during this time when we as transplant recipients need to be so cautious during COVID-19. This includes the staff at VGH when I had my transplant in 2013; the liver clinic staff who follow us for the rest of our lives and are always there for us if we have questions; the research team that are working to keep us safe & healthy; and all the health-care workers here in Kelowna and throughout the province of BC. Your dedication and care goes far and beyond a "regular job". I am deeply thankful that you are there for us as residents of BC - you are our BC HEROES."



Earl Liver recipient (1997)

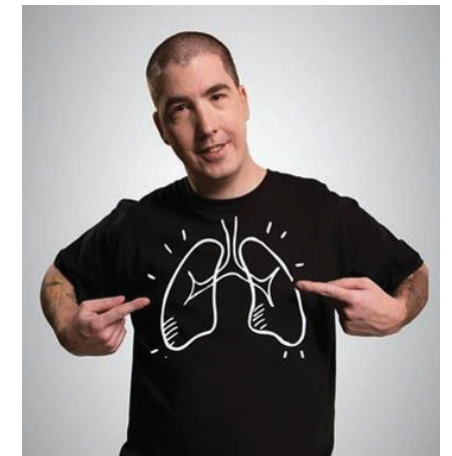
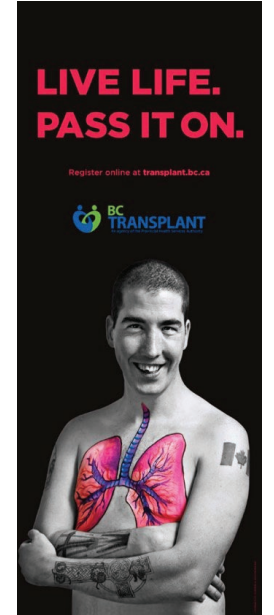


"Thanks to my gift of life I have been able to see my children complete their education, get married, and present my wife of 50+ years with five awesome grandkids, which certainly helps keep me young. I am fortunate to have an extremely healthy life situation, which allows me to keep fit by exercising regularly, volunteering with several transplant related entities, and enjoy life. Everything recipients have today and our many tomorrows are a result of our gifts of life, and the efforts of all of the exceptional health-care workers like yourselves, for which I am truly grateful. I say forever thank you thank you, to each and every one of you!!!"

Darvy Double-lung recipient (2006)



"Christmas time and the holidays are huge for me because I had my transplant in December. Christmas brings back a lot of memories for me from my donor and we are just extra thankful and really happy to be here."





Ka Yee 2x Kidney recipient (1999 & 2017)



Dear health-care staff,

My name is Ka Yee and I am a two-time kidney transplant recipient. I am truly thankful for the gifts of life and would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all of you for making this happen!

I was diagnosed with end stage renal disease and started dialysis when I was 14. Four years later, I received my first kidney transplant at BC Children's Hospital, which lasted for almost 16 years. In 2015, I went back on dialysis and received my second kidney in 2017 at Vancouver General Hospital.

Because of your dedication and hard work, and the kindness of my donors and the donor families, I am now in good health and am living a happy life. After my transplants, I have been able to enjoy outdoor activities such as hiking and kayaking. I have become a dialysis technician. I have also been volunteering with BC Transplant and the Chinese Renal Association. I have participated in the Operation Popcorn campaign to thank the health-care professionals for several years. And this year marks the 30th Operation Popcorn!

Thank you all from the bottom of my heart for saving my life and other patients' lives! Because of your selflessness and all that you do, miracles continue to happen and we can live a normal life again! You guys are heroes!

Stay safe,

Ka Yee



Kristy, Scottie, Baker & Elliott with their mother/grandmother Vicki who was an organ donor.

Dear health-care staff,

My name is Kristy DelGrosso, and my mom Vicki was no stranger to the health-care system. In 1986 my mom was diagnosed with cystic fibrosis at the age of 32. I've watched my entire life as the best team of doctors and nurses tailored medications and treatment plans to give her the best possible quality of life. It is because of you that I got to hold her arm while I walked down the aisle to get married, because of you that I got to see my mom become a grandma and hold my daughter. It's because of you I got memories that I never dreamed I would get to have with my mom.

In 2017 my mom entered the ICU and was placed on an ECMO machine to await a double-lung transplant. For the next 16 days I clung to your every word. You filled me in every single day, and every single change over. You cheered for her and it felt like everyone there was on her side. Unfortunately we did not get the transplant we were hoping for, but thanks to your amazing care, some of my mom's organs were able to be donated. A simple thank you doesn't adequately express how I feel, but I've come to realize that no words ever will. You make a difference, and I will forever be grateful for all that you did for my family.

Thank you,

Kristy



Elizabeth Heart recipient (2011)



To the amazing people who make transplants happen,

As the very grateful recipient of a heart transplant, I am honoured to be able to thank you, the people who have given me a new chance at life. Your care, compassion, patience, and definitely your humour, carried me through pre-transplant, transplant, and post-transplant.

To those of you on the recovery end, thank you so much for the care and respect you give our donors, for your grace and empathy, and for the support and strength you give to our donor families.

To those of you on the recipient end, thank you for the care and respect you gave me during both my pre- and post-transplant journeys. You check on us, monitor us, and make sure we're in the best state for recovery, every day, multiple times. I have been so fortunate, in all my hospital experiences, to have been in the care of amazing, compassionate nurses.

And thanks to all of you, I am enjoying life – my husband and I love to explore our home region and abroad and have, among other things, gone heli-hiking in the Bugaboos and travelling across Canada and to Europe. I have had the immense pleasure of singing in Carnegie Hall in New York with my choir. I was able to assist my father in the end-of-life care of my mother.

Your skill and dedication makes our transplants successful. Thank you so much for all you do and for dedicating yourselves to the care of others.

Elizabeth



Simone with her son Elliott, who was an organ donor.

Hi health-care staff,

I am the proud parent of Elliott who was able to give the gift of life (pancreas, liver and kidney) when he passed suddenly after a motorcycle accident at 17. As you can imagine, I was a mess arriving at the emergency on my own. The kindness and empathy that I was shown by everyone was unbelievable. Being a health-care worker is not just about supporting those that are sick but also a mother who is trying to come to terms with the enormity of losing her only child. You mopped my tears, found me food, made me tea, listened to my stories and encouraged me to touch, kiss, sing and talk to Elliott. At the same time providing exceptional care for my son and others. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Elliott was moved to ICU and the staff was incredible, as hundreds of grieving friends and family descended on the hospital. You made a difference for so many. Elliott received the best, right to the end. I miss my boy every day, but am comforted that he was able to give the gift of life to others and was treated with such respect and dignity by you all.

It has taken time, but almost 15 years later I am able to smile as I remember how happy he made me being a mum. So I hope you all know how amazing you are and because of your support I am still standing. I watch outside my window as I see my boy's spirit soar high as an eagle and he sends his message of gratitude right back to you.

Forever grateful to you all,

Elliott's mum, Simone



December 6-10, 2021

