



Dear Transplant Nurse,

My name is Heather and I am the daughter of a lung recipient. My father, Edwin, received a new lung on November 12, 2001. Prior to his transplant he suffered horribly for several years from Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis. After fighting for his every breath and very close to death we received a phone call. The Hospital of The University of Pennsylvania had a lung for him. We rushed over there at 2:00 in the morning. Our blood was pumping quickly through our veins. We were the most scared and the most excited we have ever been. During the surgery I waited with my mother, brother and husband. Caring nurses came in and out of the room to give us updates on his condition. When the miracle surgery was completed we allowed ourselves to breath a small sigh of relief knowing that there was a long and hard journey ahead of him and us. In the ICU, the transplant nurses watched him as if he were their own family. It gave us great comfort when we went home at night because we knew he was in caring hands.

After being released from the hospital, my father had to return for rehab therapy several times a week. The transplant nurses in the rehab facility worked patiently and tirelessly with him. He continued this routine for several months.

Over the next year and a half, my father had many setbacks, but with the support of the nurses and the entire transplant team he worked hard to try and stay strong. Then, in March of 2003 he became gravely ill with pneumonia. He was on life support for 21 days. The entire medical team was brilliant, caring and empathetic. The nurses especially were on top of his every need. They cared for him, myself and my family. When it was time to turn off the life support the nurses were wonderful and gentle with my father and us. He passed on peacefully on April 4, 2003.

In many ways I am my father's voice now. I know that he would have loved to write this letter himself. I feel that he is with me as I am writing this letter to you and that he is putting his hand on my shoulder and wiping my tears. Thank you from the bottom of my soul for being the voice, strength and caregiver for the patients who rely on you with their life. Your caring actions help the whole family of a transplant recipient because when a family's loved one is cared for it brings them great comfort and peace.

With great thanks,

*Heather Steinberg*

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