

Two Lives Saved
A Personal story
By
Emily Justus
January 7, 2019

Two Lives Saved

I have been given the opportunity to witness and experience not one, but two organ donations in my family. Because of organ donation I was able to have two very important people not only stay in my life, but live a new and healthy one of their own. I agree with all concepts of organ donation and stand behind my opinion because of the amazing impact it has caused in my life. On top of that the organs donated were from living family members. It is not very common that someone experiences two organ transplants that are completely successful in the same family.

The first transplant that took place was my mother's father, my grandfather, who had double kidney failure. My grandfather's mother died when he was eleven years old from the same kidney disease he developed later on in life. However, compared to my great grandmother, my grandpa was fortunate due to the progression in technology and research. The only thing missing was a compatible donor for the kidney he needed. My grandpa was 53 at this time and his daughter; my mother was 28. My mother then decided to offer to test for the donation, and ended up being a match. This transplant was twenty years ago and both my mom and grandpa are living life every day thanking God for this experience.

Today my grandfather is one of the most important people in my life, and he has been able to impact my life in so many ways. My grandpa has been a rock in my life and my sibling's lives. He has done so many great things in his life for his family and for me, his only granddaughter. Also because of the success of the transplant my grandpa is now living life doing all his favorite things such as traveling, spending time with his grand kids, and his family. My grandpa is such a huge part of not only my life but also our whole family, and without organ donation and my mom's kidney, he would not be here today. My grandpa was able to see his great grandson come into the world in November, and now he has a whole new joy of being a great-grandparent.

The second transplant in my family was my aunt, who has been my best friend ever since I was born. She has helped me get through many challenging things in my life. Because I was older when she was going through her transplant, I was able to be there and support her through this process. This was a very impactful experience for me for many reasons. I got to watch my aunt go from a very sick person who was not living the life she wanted, to a very happy and healthy one. I saw her change physically and mentally and become an all around healthier person. When she got sick, it was hard for all of us, and we knew the journey was just starting for her. When she was ready to get her transplant, the first person to volunteer was her husband. Of course the chance of him being a match was extremely low, however, he turned out to be an exact match. My aunt is now full of energy and is living a very happy life with her husband and son. I would not be the person I am today without her impact on my life. Without organ donation this would not have been possible.

My family and I are so thankful for organ transplants and the technology that has made it possible for our family to be healed and whole. Organ donation in my family specifically has allowed two sick people to have a second chance at a healthy life. It also allowed my mom and uncle to give their loved ones the ability to live a healthy life. Because of organ donation, all four members of my family have been able to experience on multiple levels the effects of organ transplants. Both my grandpa and my aunt are still making an impact on my life and the rest of my family. The impact of any kind of organ donation and transplant is very inspiring to me; this is because I have had the experience of seeing both family members have successful surgeries that gave them life.

