

Update 2009: Liver Transplantation

The Penn Transplant Institute at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania is among the busiest centers for adult liver transplantation in the country. With more than 100 procedures performed every year since 2002, Penn consistently outpaces the national average for 1-month and 1-year survival, for both patient and graft (Figure 1).

Living Donor Liver Transplantation at Penn

Each year, approximately 10 percent of patients die while on the waiting list for liver transplantation. To meet the growing needs of patients with end-stage liver disease, transplant centers are developing innovative ways to increase the number of livers available for transplantation. Currently, the Transplant Institute at Penn is one of nine centers participating in a National Institutes of Health (NIH) sponsored multi-center study of adult-to-adult living donor liver transplantation. Living donor transplantation, in which a family member or close friend provides a portion of his or her liver to the recipient, has the potential to reduce the morbidity and mortality while waiting for a liver transplant. The typical candidate for living donor donation is a patient with moderate-to-severe liver disease whose Model for End-Stage Liver Disease (MELD) score is too low to ensure a transplant within a defined period of time.

In adult living donor liver transplantation, either a full right side or full left side of a liver from a healthy adult is transplanted into another adult with end-stage liver disease.

CASE STUDY

Mr. R, a 57-year-old man with cirrhosis of the liver secondary to hepatitis C infection, came to the hepatology program at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania following the development of encephalopathy, ascites and electrolyte disturbances. When his condition continued to deteriorate despite intensive medical management, his case was referred by the liver transplant team to the Penn Liver Transplant Committee for an assessment of his candidacy for liver transplantation. After considering the internal waitlist criteria and reviewing Mr. R's MELD score and other factors, the Committee decided that his symptoms and medical status were appropriate to place him on the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) liver transplantation list, but would not be high enough to result in any offers of deceased donors. After a meeting with the transplant team, Mr. R decided to consider the possibility of a living

**Adult Patient and Graft Survival Rates
Penn Liver Transplant Program
Compared to National Average**

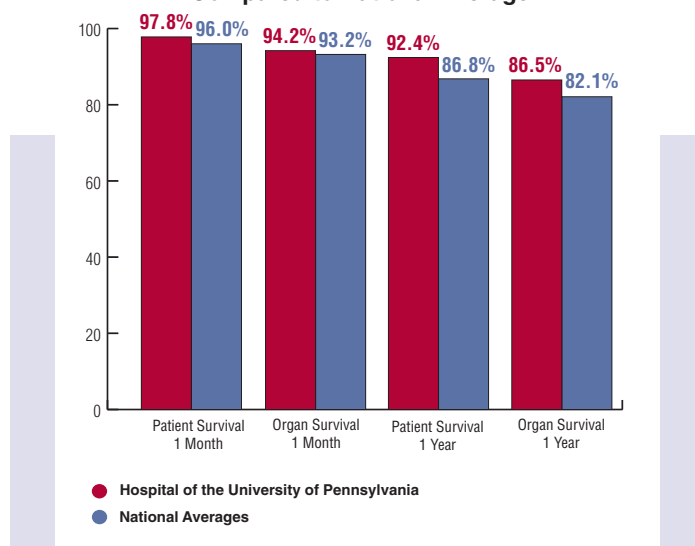


Figure 1. Penn Transplant Program patient and organ survival at one month and one year, vs. national averages.

donor transplant and went home to consult with his family. Several weeks later, his son, AJ, decided that he wished to be evaluated as a living donor. At age 36, AJ was within the donor age parameters, his physical condition was good and he had no history of past or current serious disease. Following medical evaluation, imaging, and laboratory tests, AJ was determined to be a suitable living donor candidate. He then met privately with a social worker and psychiatrist who assessed the psychosocial motivation for his decision to become a donor. Having determined that AJ arrived at the decision of his own volition, he was cleared to undergo liver biopsy, complete his evaluation, and donate a portion of his liver to his father.

During a full day procedure two weeks later, the right part of AJ's liver was transplanted into his father. Though AJ experienced some pain and discomfort in the days immediately following his surgery, his recovery was otherwise uneventful. At his three-month follow-up visit, MRI scans determined that most of the liver tissue he'd lost had regenerated. Mr. R had no major complications following his liver transplant, and within days experienced a dramatic improvement in liver-associated symptoms.

Our Team of Faculty

Penn's Liver Transplant Program brings together a multidisciplinary team of physicians, nurse specialists and hospital support staff who provide coordinated care throughout the entire transplant process. Our goal is to meet the unique physical and emotional needs of each patient in a caring, professional environment.

Transplant Hepatologists

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Manager of Penn Transplant Liver Clinical Research

Mary Kaminski, PA-C

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Denise M. DuPont
Outreach to Physicians and Patients

Access

Patient appointments are available at:

Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania

Penn Transplant Institute

Ground Rhoads
3400 Spruce Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Division of Gastroenterology

3 Dulles
3400 Spruce Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Penn Presbyterian Medical Center

Division of Gastroenterology
Wright-Saunders, Suite W218
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Penn Medicine at Radnor

250 King of Prussia Road
Radnor, PA 19087

To refer a patient and/or consult with a doctor:

Call 800.789.PENN (7366) or
visit pennmedicine.org/referral.



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800.789.PENN PennMedicine.org