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Dyamond's Story



"I'm grateful and give thanks everyday to my donor family for my 'Gift of Life'..." - Dyamond Ott

My name is Dyamond and I'm 15 years old. When I was 6 years old I was diagnosed with a liver disease, Progressive Familial Intra Hepatic Cholestasis Type 3 and a blood disease, Congenital Hemolytic Anemia. Which meant my liver was deteriorating and the red blood cells in my blood were not living as long as a healthy person.

Due to these two diseases I had very low energy, an extremely enlarged spleen, extended stomach, terrible itching, and yellow eyes, just to name a few. Over the next 6 years, I had lots of tests and procedures and took 9 medications a day. I haven't gone through this alone; my sister Dallas, at the age of two was diagnosed with the same liver disease. She is now 9 years old and thankfully her disease isn't progressing as fast as mine.

When I was 12 years old, my doctor at the University of Iowa told me that I needed to be evaluated by the transplant team. We were sent to the Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, NE. It was a 5-day evaluation and I learned a lot about what was happening with my body and what needed to happen in order for me to live a long life. They did lots of tests over the next 3 months and through these tests, they discovered I had developed a kidney disease, Advance Global Glomerulosclerosis. They told me I now needed a liver and kidney transplant.

On July 21, 2006, I was placed on the UNOS (United Network for Organ Sharing) waiting list for a liver and kidney transplant. My dad was going through testing to be my kidney donor.

At 12:05 a.m. on September 21, 2006, our phone rang and we were told that they had potential organs for me. I had very mixed feelings; Scared (major surgery-the unknown), Sad (knowing that a family had lost a loved one), Happy (I was getting a second chance at life), and Thankful (to the donor family). We got the confirmation call at 3:30 a.m. to head to Omaha; I would be receiving both liver and kidney from the same donor.

I spent the next 3 months at the Nebraska Medical Center; 6 weeks as an inpatient and 6 weeks at the outpatient facility. My recovery was slower than other patients that had a liver transplant at the same time I did, but I have to remember that I had a double organ transplant. I've had several minor set backs, but my surgeons keep telling me that my new organs love my body and they are doing awesome. I'm getting stronger everyday and am looking forward to everything that life has to offer me.

I am grateful and give thanks everyday to my donor family for my 'Gift of Life', but I also want you to know what I have learned through my experience 'Life is a Gift'.