

second transplant. I wasn't dealing with medical issues like I had while on dialysis. I felt so free and happy. I graduated from high school three months later. I went on to college, got married and even had a child.

Eighteen years is considered good with a deceased donor transplant. But, eventually, I did return to dialysis. I decided to opt for in-center nocturnal hemodialysis, which ended up lasting for the next twelve years. I felt comfortable in the beginning with this treatment option, so I decided against another transplant. I've already had two. Would I be selfish?

But dialysis started to take a toll on me. Over the past decade I have learned so much about kidney disease and treatment options. I finally decided it was in my best interest to try for another transplant. On June 22, 2011, I was called for a transplant. Fortunately, it was another success.

You have the option. Call your local transplant center and talk to them. Let them help you to determine whether transplant is for you. Be informed.

Learn More

For more information about transplant or other treatment options, please contact Quality Insights Renal Network 4.



Quality
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To file a grievance, please contact Quality Insights Renal Network 4 at: Patient Toll Free Line: 1-800-548-9205, www.qirn4.org, 1586 Sumneytown Pike #1470, Kulpsville, PA 19443.

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PATIENTS HELPING PATIENTS

*Why I Chose Transplant
Diana's Story*



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“Transplant today is not something to fear. Yes, it’s just another option, not a cure. It may or may not last a lifetime. But, the benefits for long term health are good.”

- Diana Headlee-Bell

Why I Chose Transplant

By Diana Headlee-Bell

It has been over 40 years since I was diagnosed with End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD). Unexpectedly starting hemodialysis at age fifteen was not only scary, but it made a huge impact on my life as a young teen in high school. I spent three days in a coma after my trial on dialysis. My parents were going to let me go. I was blessed with a doctor that said, “Let’s give her another chance. Let’s put her back on dialysis.” Dialysis saved my life.

In October of that year, I had a living donor transplant. My father donated his kidney to me. Things started out well. But six weeks later, the transplanted kidney had to be removed. I was devastated. The kidney had developed blood clots. Not a normal occurrence. Not a rejection. The anti-rejection drugs used in those days were hard on my body. My emotions were all over the place and my physical appearance had changed dramatically. At that point in my life, I said I never wanted another transplant. I returned to dialysis.

For the next three years, I went to school, got off the bus, got in the car

and my father would drive me into dialysis three evenings a week. I was determined to not let my high school years be interrupted. I did get a few calls from transplant over those three years, telling me they had a kidney. But I always shared with them why I did not want another kidney at the time. I think my parents had something to do with keeping me on the list.

Then it happened. March 23, 1981 was three months prior to my high school graduation. My family and I had just returned from visiting my grandmother. The phone was ringing. I answered it. It was the transplant center telling me they had a kidney for me. I responded, “I am graduating in three months. There are a lot of things going on I don’t want to miss.” I hung up. But I suddenly had this overwhelming feeling that I should have said yes. Then the phone rang again. The person on the other end said, “Can we talk to your parents?” They continued to tell me a little bit about the deceased donor and that it was a ‘perfect’ match. It was then that I said to my family that I better go in. And it made a huge difference on my life.

The kidney lasted 18 years. No dialysis for 18 years. I felt so normal. I never knew what normal was until that