



What about Heart Transplant?

By University Hospital Pediatric
Heart Transplant Team

Is it Scary?



It is an operation, which is a little bit scary.

You will have to stay in the hospital for a few weeks,
your mommy or daddy can stay with you.

Doctors and nurses will give you medicine so it
doesn't hurt too much, they will give you medicine
to sleep for the operation.

The doctors want to make you feel better.

???????Why???????

Your heart is not working properly.

Your mommy and Daddy can't make it better by themselves.

The doctors need to take out the heart that is not working and give you a new heart.



What will Happen to Me?

First there are a lot of tests, people will poke you and look at you, they take pictures with big machines that can see inside you.

Then you have to wait on a list with other kids who need to have a transplant too.



When is the Transplant?



We don't know for sure when the transplant will be.

Sometime in the next year you will get a new heart. You need the new heart to make you better.

You might have to wait a long time but we are working very hard to find the right heart for you.



How Will I Feel?

After the transplant you will not feel better right away. You might even feel worse for a while. Having an operation is not easy. Plus you have to have medicine and tests to keep everything working properly.

You will get a little bit better every day until you are well enough to go home.



What do I Have to Do?



You can be brave and strong. Do your best to eat and drink as soon as the doctor says you can. Sometimes you don't feel like eating right away but you need food to make you stronger.

Walking will make you stronger too. Try to get up and walk at least three times a day to help you get stronger faster.

Your Mom and Dad will help you.

How Long do I Have to Take Medicine?



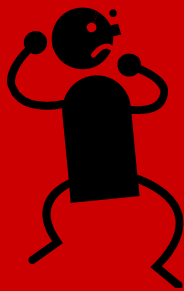
You do have to have medicine every day for the rest of your life.

You are on the most medicine right after transplant.

After 1 year you usually only have to take 4 or 5 kinds of medicine.

Why is Medicine Important?

- That is a great question
- To answer it we have to talk about your immune system which is hard to understand



What is the Immune System?



This is your defense system

Pretend you have your own army marching around inside.

The soldiers of the army are trying to keep you safe.

They chase away anything that they think will hurt you.

Normally that is bacteria and viruses.

What happens to the army after Transplant?

After your transplant your soldiers will think your new heart is a giant virus.

They will try to chase away your new heart.

Your heart hides behind the medicine so the soldiers can't chase it away.



How do I protect myself?

- The medicine will also hide the bugs that make you sick, how can you chase the bugs away?
- You will have to help your army to protect you by remembering to wash your hands
 - Every time you go to the bathroom
 - Before you eat
 - When you come home after school
 - or after playing outside



When Will I be Normal?



You are a normal kid, just with a transplant. It will take about 3 months for you to feel normal again.

You can play with your friends and eat junk food but you do have to be a little bit careful. If your friends are sick you can't visit them because you will get sick too.



Can I Play Baseball or Hockey?



Yes you can. Lots of kids swim, play hockey, dance and all kinds of sports after transplant.

There are even "Olympic" games for transplant patients. Every two years there are Transplant Games around the world. You only have to be 5 years old to go to the games and compete against other transplant kids in swimming and track and field.



What will I be when I grow up?



You will be a strong Man or Woman

You can be a fireman, a doctor or a teacher or whatever else you want to be.

You can even be a Mommy or a Daddy some day.

