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# Price to tackle big swim

BY CATHERINE MASSEY

YALLINGUP lung transplant recipient John Price will take to the water for the Busselton Jetty Swim this weekend in a personal challenge to raise awareness for organ donation.

Just 16 months after a generous and anonymous donor helped save his life, the 76-year-old grandfather will tackle the 3.6km solo swim for the first time since he received the single lung transplant in October 2021.

He has previously completed the event 13 times and said he would be "absolutely ecstatic" to cross the finish line once again.

"It's going to be exciting to get in the water and get around the end of the jetty and see the finish line," John said.

In 2012, John was diagnosed with idiopathic interstitial pulmonary fibrosis, a chronic disease that causes the tissue surrounding the air sacs to thicken, making it increasingly difficult to breathe over time.

After years of maintaining good health, John suffered



76 year-old Yallingup local John Price before (right) and after (left) his life saving single-lung transplant. Photos supplied.

an acute exacerbation in early 2021 causing his lung function to decline significantly.

His ailing health prompted him to withdraw from the Busselton Jetty Swim that

year and he was listed on the lung transplant waitlist before receiving his life-saving gift in October 2021.

The disease claimed the life of his older brother, Graham, in 2015.

John said he considered himself to be "one of the luckiest people in the world".

"Had I not been fortunate enough to receive a transplant, I know that the only situation for me was proba-



John Price in hospital after receiving his new lung, that he will take around the Busselton Jetty this weekend. Photo supplied.

bly an early death," he said.

The Busselton Jetty Swim, now in its 28th year is expected to host more than 4000 swimmers this year in both solo and team events.

This weekend's swim will be the longest distance covered by John since his operation, with a 3.1km swim his current record.

He trains four times a week in the Yallingup lagoon with a group of friends, and will complete the event alongside local Kathryn Langridge.

"Being strong and fit is a mantra I survive by on a daily basis, so I'll be perfectly happy just to finish this event and do it with a smile on my

face.

John said he hoped his swim would encourage more people to join the organ donation register.

"I would love to see more donors sign up to the donation register so that people who have life-ending diseases can have a chance," he said.

"I am incredibly grateful to my donor and donor family, my own family and friends, and the medical team at Fiona Stanley Hospital who have all provided me with unstinting support."

The Busselton Jetty Swim will take place this Sunday at 8am.