



The most precious gift of all

In the mid-1990s I was diagnosed with a life threatening liver disease with the prognosis being that if I did not have a liver transplant, it was unlikely that I would survive more than 10 years.

My liver disease is Primary Biliary Cirrhosis and while its cause is unknown, it is likely to be due to some malfunctioning in my auto-immune system. My gastro-enterologist deferred my transplant for as long as possible. However, in 2001, I was given the ultimate gift of a donor liver and a second chance to lead a relatively healthy and productive life.

My post-operative period and anti-rejection medications were managed successfully by the specialists and the highly competent and professional medical and nursing teams at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney and I have been blessed for more than 14 years with a fairly good quality of life.

Nevertheless, I have regular monitoring by the transplant specialist to ensure my condition is relatively stable and I accept with grace that I will be taking anti-rejection medication for the rest of my life.

During the past 14 years I have experienced the joy of being a grandmother and have been able to pursue a wide range of interests and activities, including weekly sessions of gentle exercise such as tai-chi, qigong and physiotherapy. I have also attended art history

lectures and Cantonese and French conversation classes, travelled extensively overseas and volunteered my time on a weekly basis supervising post-graduate students at a major Sydney University. I am also passionate about music and going to the theatre.

Moreover I have the love and support of my family and close friends and enjoy the camaraderie and social contact with work colleagues, friends and neighbours— all aspects of life which make it meaningful.

This chapter of my life would not have been possible without the decision and sacrifice of the donor family to donate the organs and tissues of their loved one. My gratitude towards this family is boundless and I pray that they take comfort that, by their decision, the spirit of their loved one lives on in so many of us. Indeed, they have given me the most precious gift of all.



Doreen Cheong



Australian Government
Organ and Tissue Authority

donate life

For more information about organ and tissue donation please visit
www.donatelife.gov.au