Jewish Transplant Care

The Liver Transplant Program at Jewish Hospital

Jewish Hospital is dedicated to providing the highest quality of care for patients in need of liver transplantation. Our multi-disciplinary team of experienced healthcare professionals works together toward the singular goal of providing you with the best medical outcome possible. This team approach gives us the ability to offer customized, comprehensive care throughout the course of your illness.

Our Liver Transplant Team includes transplant surgeons, hepatologists, coordinators, psychiatrists, social workers, nutritionists, financial coordinators, medical consultants and administrators who work closely with the operating room, critical care and medical-surgical units at Jewish Hospital.

In association with the University of Louisville Digestive Health Center, the Jewish Hospital Transplant Center serves as a regional referral center for transplantation of the liver, as well as the kidney, heart, lung and pancreas. Since the beginning of the Liver Transplant Program, Jewish Hospital has performed nearly 600 liver transplants, achieving the most number of liver transplants in Kentucky's history in 2009.

Jewish Hospital also offers a transplant pharmacy located on the hospital campus, available to all past and current transplant recipients. This service is available to ensure there is no disruption in a patient's ability to follow a complex medication regimen. For more information concerning the pharmacy, or The Transplant Center at Jewish Hospital, call 1-800-866-7539 and follow the organ-specific telephone prompts.

LIVER TRANSPLANT SERVICES

Jewish Transplant Care

For more information on Jewish Transplant Care and our services, or to be referred to a physician, call (800) 866-7539 or visit www.jhsmh.org

Jewish Transplant Care

www.jhsmh.org

Liver Function

Your liver is a filter for the body that detoxifies the blood. Medications, alcohol and other substances are cleared from the body as blood passes through the liver. The liver also makes proteins important for blood clotting and resisting infections by producing immune factors and removing bacteria from the blood stream.

What Causes Liver Disease?

A healthy liver is able to repair itself when it becomes damaged. As with any other injury, when the liver "heals" itself, scar tissue is formed. With end-stage liver disease, the scarring is so advanced that the liver can no longer effectively repair damaged cells. A healthy liver is necessary for survival. Some causes for liver disease are:

- Cirrhosis, or scarring, of the liver is caused by irreversible chronic liver injury and repair which develops over a long period of time. Hepatitis C, heavy alcohol use and fatty infiltration of the liver are examples of this type of condition.
- Fulminant liver failure is a rapid decline in liver function and is attributed to drugs, toxins and viruses.
- Metabolic or inherited diseases such as imbalances of iron, cholesterol, copper or enzymes, which damage the liver.
- Primary Liver Cancer or Hepatocellular Carcinoma is a tumor that develops in the liver, most often when it is cirrhotic, or severely scarred, that can be treated with transplantation.

Liver Transplant

A liver transplant is surgery to replace a diseased liver with a healthy liver. When a patient receives a liver transplant, the entire liver is removed and then replaced by either a completely new liver or a portion of a healthy liver during a four- to eight-hour procedure. After surgery, patients are monitored in the Intensive Care Unit until stable, and are then transferred to a dedicated Transplant Unit until healthy enough for discharge.

Our team of trained professionals recognizes your liver transplant is not simply a surgery, but rather a process for which to prepare both physically and emotionally. We will work closely with you and your family through the entire procedure, as well as throughout post-transplantation and recovery.

Who is a Candidate for a Liver Transplant?

The ideal liver transplant candidate is the patient who has been treated for liver disease and optimized with all other medical treatments, but who's disease is not responsive to therapy. Individuals who have liver disease may have many of the following complications:

- Jaundice, or yellowing of the skin and eyes
- Dark, tea-colored urine
- Gray or light (clay) colored bowel movements
- Ascties, or an abnormal buildup of fluid in the abdomen
- Excessive itching
- Vomiting of blood
- A tendency to bleed
- Mental confusion or forgetfulness

Treatment Options

While liver disease is a very serious condition, there are numerous treatment options available, depending on the specific type of illness, as well as its progression. Not everyone needs a transplant, and some patients are not candidates for transplants.

The transplant team assigned to you will walk you through the various options to determine the best course of action for your individual situation and to optimize all other medical therapies possible. It is important to emphasize that you as the patient are the most important part of our team.

Transplant Referral

Each patient referred to The Transplant Center at Jewish Hospital undergoes a thorough medical assessment to determine suitability as a transplantation candidate. Patients are also screened for anticipated compliance, support system availability, emotional stability and financial coverage for the transplant and post-transplantation care.

The screening process evaluates the severity of the liver disease and determines if the patient should be placed on the waiting list. The evaluation includes a battery of tests that access how diseased the liver is, as well as how healthy other organs are, such as the heart and kidneys.

The patient will also meet with a liver specialist, transplant surgeon, psychologist and dietitian, as well as attend a mandatory education class. Once this initial evaluation is complete, the case is presented to a review committee of physicians and other transplant team members who may request additional testing. If the patient is accepted as a candidate, they are placed on the liver transplant waiting list.

Jewish
Transplant Care

www.jhsmh.org