

## Congratulations!

You have successfully come through surgery. Now begins the recovery process and life with your new heart.

This book is meant to help you and your care partners understand the process. It will help teach you what you need to know about taking care of yourself, and serve as a reference guide for common questions.

Considering the magnitude of the surgery and depending on the amount of time you and your family had to prepare for your transplant, you may be feeling somewhat overwhelmed. Remember that you need to heal emotionally, mentally and spiritually as well as physically.

Although patients want to return to a “normal lifestyle” immediately, in truth it will take time. It may be several months before you begin to feel you have regained your strength and have a good understanding of how to manage your treatment. However, you will leave the hospital with a sound knowledge of your medicines, your diet and your basic cares.

As one patient commented, *“You are not trading your situation for one that is medical free; but, in fact, you are changing from having to cope with a chronic illness to chronic management.”*

The good news is that you will hopefully be able to have a quality-filled life and resume some of the previous activities that you enjoyed before you became so ill. This will take some time, patience and a lot of hard work.

During the time immediately following your transplant it may be helpful for you and your family to speak with another post transplant patient and their family, participate in a transplant support group, discuss your concerns with the transplant team coordinators, social worker, psychologist, or our chaplain services. You may be surprised to hear how normal your feelings are, but it is vital to have your feelings and concerns addressed. It is important to receive acknowledgement that this is just another transition in your life and that it will take time to get comfortable with all the new changes.

### Once again, congratulations!

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IT AMAZES ME THAT HEART  
TRANSPLANTATION CAN BE DONE  
RIGHT HERE IN THE MIDWEST.

– *Nebraska Medicine patient*

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