

# 'HE DOESN'T HAVE THAT LONG,' GEORGETOWN GRANDFATHER IN DIRE NEED OF LIVER TRANSPLANT

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Two-year-old Davis doesn't want anyone sitting in his grandfather's chair. He's waiting for him to come home.

The Georgetown family is waiting, hoping that their father, 62-year-old Eric De Silva will get a liver transplant soon, but without a live donor, they could be waiting months.

"He doesn't have that long," said daughter Ashley De Silva, explaining that her father fell ill in June, after noticing swelling, fluid collecting in his legs and abdomen.

He kept saying "I'm OK, I'll get better," until one night his daughter called the ambulance, and he

was taken to Georgetown Hospital.

Staff at the hospital advised him that he had acute liver failure and gave him 24 hours to live.

His family took him to Sunnybrook Hospital, where staff gave him treatment.

"It could happen to anyone," said Ashley, explaining that acute liver failure occurs when the liver becomes scarred and is unable to filter toxins from the body.

De Silva is currently waiting for a liver transplant through Toronto General Hospital, where he is ranked in high need.

"A deceased donor organ could take up to a year," said Ashley, explaining that the hospital

has the largest live liver donation program in the country.

The family continues to search for possible donor candidates, hoping that someone with their father's blood type comes forward.

De Silva is in the A group of blood types, and the ideal candidate would be his height, five-foot-three or taller.

"He's the type of guy that would give you the shirt off his back," said Ashley, explaining that he absolutely adores his two grandchildren, ages one and two. "He really wants to see them grow up."

De Silva moved to Canada from Guyana with his wife when they were young, starting their lives



Photo courtesy of Ashley De Silva

Eric De Silva is a Georgetown resident in need of a liver transplant. His family is searching for a live donation, as a deceased donor could be a year wait.

together in Toronto before moving to Brampton, and subsequently Georgetown with their four children.

"They started with nothing in this country together," said Ashley, explaining that her dad worked for Canada Packers for over 20 years before starting his own contracting business.

"He always gave back to

the community here," she said, remembering countless community barbecues and events with the local Canadian-Caribbean community. "He was the one cleaning out the fridge, cooking up a storm for everyone."

According to the Canadian Liver Foundation, over one in four Canadians will be affected by liv-

er disease in their lifetime.

Currently, there are over 400,000 patients requiring liver donations in Canada.

For more information, or to become a donor, contact the University Health Network's liver donor program at 416-340-4800 ext. 6581 or email livingdonor-liver@uhn.ca.

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