



MATNAT CHAIM

Volunteers for Kidney Transplantation

Founded by Rabbi Heber z"l



Tisha B'av recalls the destruction of the first and second Temples, when hatred tore our society apart from within. The physical destruction of the Temple was only the culmination of a painful and sad process of the polarization and disintegration of our people.

What was destroyed by hate can be rebuilt by love. We witness the enormous power of unconditional love each time a volunteer enters the operating room to donate an organ to a stranger. Little by little, donation after donation, love will bring us redemption.

For this Tisha B'Av, we have collected some particularly moving stories that demonstrate the power of love.



A Message from Rachel Heber, Matnat Chaim Chair

Jerusalem was destroyed only because of gratuitous hatred... and can be repaired by acts of unconditional love! Can there be a greater example of love than kidney donation? What is a more loving act than a healthy person who enters the operating room to give a part of his body to a stranger?

Altruistic donation is an amazing phenomenon whose light is visible from one end of the world to the other. People from all over want to hear Matnat Chaim's story, want to understand what is happening here in this tiny country that illuminates the whole world.

"Zion shall be redeemed in judgment, and her captivity shall be redeemed in righteousness"

(Isaiah, 1/27)

Giving of oneself, in any form, will make the world a better place and hasten our redemption.

A community of love



When Noam Refaeli needed a kidney transplant, he didn't know what to do. His wife and children were not compatible donors, and how can you ask someone for such a huge favor? Finally, Noam was convinced to publish a letter in the newsletter of Ofra, the town where he lives. To his astonishment, on the day the letter was published, he received seven phone calls from Ofra residents who offered to donate their kidneys, and at the beginning of the following week, dozens more calls were received. Calls came from all sorts of people – young; old; those who were told they couldn't donate because they were overweight, and decided to diet; even former Ofra residents who no longer lived there but asked to be tested as well. As Noam says: "I was completely shocked, it was just unimaginable. I couldn't sleep for a week because I was so excited and moved by these people, these neighbors of mine."

In the end, Noam received a kidney from his sister who was a match. But thanks to the letter he published, dozens of residents of Ofra started the testing process, and many of them have already donated to other patients who were waiting their turn.

Brotherly love



"We are accustomed to admire altruistic kidney donors while looking at donation within the family as natural and necessary act. But this is completely wrong! We, the altruistic donors, had a choice. Each of us considered the idea of donating, sometimes for years, progressing at our own pace, until we reached the moment of donation completely prepared. For family members, on the other hand, the clock is ticking, there may be no time for consideration, opinion and discussions. They have to jump right in, even if they are not altogether happy with the decision." This is how Evelyn Hazut, coordinator of Matnat Chaim's family division and a donor herself, describes the special character of family donors.

Donating a kidney to a family member has great benefits, but should never be taken for granted. The family division can step in to allay concerns and answer questions. Evelyn emphasizes the challenges: "Altruistic donors can decide whether to keep in touch with their recipients; the family member has no choice. The dynamic is permanent and not always comfortable."

Matnat Chaim's circles of love and influence are expanding to reach a wider and wider audience. Last month we were honored to participate in the plenary session of the American Jewish Congress (AJC), the global advocacy organization for the Jewish people.

Participating were: Rachel Heber, chair of Matnat Chaim, kidney donor Oshrit Ben Harosh, and her recipient Dr. Atanas Zahar.

[Watch the clip from the plenary](#)



Financial donations allow us to increase our resources, recruit more kidney donors and help more patients.

Your donation will help us to rebuild people's lives!

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