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**Interviews are available Friday, April 19 at 11 a.m. with the lead researcher and a transplant recipient. Media should call the Media Relations office at 614-293-3737 to schedule an interview. Video is available at <http://bit.ly/2PfafQa>.**

### **OHIO STATE STUDY AIMS TO INCREASE NUMBER OF LIVERS AVAILABLE FOR TRANSPLANTATION**

COLUMBUS, Ohio – Researchers at [The Ohio State University College of Medicine](#) are the first in central Ohio to test a novel miniature intensive care unit to preserve and assess donor livers prior to transplantation.

The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center [Comprehensive Transplant Center](#) is one of 12 institutions participating in the TransMedics Organ Care System (OCS) Liver PROTECT U.S. clinical trial. The OCS Liver technology is designed to keep livers in a natural state that mimics the human body so the organs can remain viable for transplant.

“The number of lives we’re able to save through liver transplantation is limited by an inadequate pool of qualified donors,” said [Dr. Sylvester Black](#), site principal investigator on the trial, assistant professor of surgery and Ohio State transplant surgeon. “In addition to preserving livers for transplant, this promising technology can be used to assess and potentially improve the function of livers that are traditionally not transplantable, which may expand the donor pool.”

Once a donated liver is acquired from a deceased organ donor, it’s placed inside a clear plastic box and attached to tubes that provide warm, oxygenated and nutrient-enriched blood. A team monitors the liver to make sure it is functioning properly, testing key indicators such as bile production. If the liver performs well over a three to six hour period, it is removed from the unit and immediately transplanted into the patient.

“Current practice involves placing donated livers in cold storage prior to transplantation, which doesn’t allow for organ assessment. Additionally, extended times on ice can render the organ unsuitable,” said [Dr. Kenneth Washburn](#), executive director of the Comprehensive Transplant Center. “This technology addresses these two key organ preservation issues.”

According to the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network, 13,292 people are waiting for a liver transplant. In 2018, only 7,170 livers were transplanted from deceased donors.

“As one of the leading transplant centers in the country, Ohio State is driving transplant innovation by rehabilitating organs that were once considered unusable,” said [Dr. K. Craig Kent](#), dean of the College of Medicine. “Our center was the first in central Ohio to offer ex-vivo lung perfusion to assess and repair lungs prior to transplant and has perfused kidneys for years.”

Ohio State’s Comprehensive Transplant Center is the region’s only adult transplant center and one of the top 15 transplant programs by volume in the United States. Doctors have performed more than 9,800 lifesaving transplants over the past 52 years, including heart, lung, kidney, liver and pancreas transplants. Each year, more than 450 patients receive the gift of life – a transplant at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center.

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