

Pulmonary Fibrosis Stories

Listen to Your Body and Don't Dismiss the Signs



David Hood is a commercial scientist in his 50s who lives in inner Sydney.

David's journey with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF) began in 2020, although he didn't realise it at the time, when a nurse noted his oxygen saturation was low, during a routine test for COVID-19.

'I felt fine at the time and brushed it off, thinking it was just the result of reduced lung capacity from years of smoking,' David recalls.

Three years later, in 2023, while running the City to Surf, David experienced shortness of breath that he couldn't ignore. It wasn't until February 2024 that he received a formal diagnosis of IPF, a progressive and irreversible lung disease that causes scarring of the lungs.

From that point, David's health declined quickly. In October, during an acute exacerbation, which is a sudden worsening of symptoms, he was hospitalised in critical condition.

'My oxygen levels were in the 80s, even while I was resting, and I required constant oxygen just to remain stable.' he says.

Doctors told David his only option was a lung transplant. The workup for transplant eligibility began immediately, and he was discharged home on oxygen. By early December 2024, he was officially listed for transplant at St Vincent's Hospital, in Sydney and just 36 hours later, he received the call. His transplant took place later that month.

Reflecting on his experience, David says the delay in diagnosis had serious consequences. **'My lung function had significantly deteriorated. I had very little time to emotionally process what a transplant would mean for my life, both in the short- and long-term.'**

'Yearly check-ups are crucial. Talk to your GP if you have any symptoms. Listen to your body, and your loved ones when they express concern. Early detection can change everything.'

-David Hood

He now recognises that he had been ignoring the warning signs.

'Looking back, I suspect the low oxygen was affecting my thinking for some time,' he says.

David's message to others is simple: **'Please don't dismiss changes in your health. Talk to your GP if you have any symptoms, and listen to your body, and your loved ones, when they express concern. Early detection can change everything.'**

Today, David is focused on recovery and gratitude. **'I'd also like to thank my supportive friends and family, and most of all, my donor and their family - people I'll never meet but to whom I owe my life.'**



Centre of Research Excellence in
Pulmonary Fibrosis

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Pulmonary Fibrosis
Awareness Month

2025