

Man donates kidney to wife, who gave birth while having CKD

KUALA LUMPUR: Jaslynn Tay received the shocking news that she had chronic kidney disease (CKD) in 2015, when she was in the first trimester of her pregnancy.

Tay and her husband, Gordon Ling, were devastated to receive the diagnosis, putting the couple in a quandary whether to continue with the pregnancy or not.

"It was a stressful time for us because of the pregnancy and the kidney diagnosis. We were told to decide to either keep the baby or go for an abortion.

"This was not something that an expecting couple should be experiencing," said Ling, who is Tay's caretaker.

The couple were adamant that they wanted to keep the baby despite the disheartening news.

"We decided to go ahead with dialysis and keep the baby.

"It was risky decision. I felt helpless watching my wife getting prepared for haemodialysis while pregnant," he said during a virtual session to mark the World Kidney Day celebration held by the Health Ministry.

Tay had to undergo haemodialysis three times a week throughout her pregnancy and was later placed at the high dependency ward during the later stages of her pregnancy.

After an emotional journey bat-



Photographs of Jaslynn Tay, Gordon Ling and their daughter, Caitlyn Darianne Ling, shown during the virtual World Kidney Day celebration yesterday.

PIC FROM NATIONAL KIDNEY FOUNDATION FACEBOOK PAGE

tlung CKD, Ling and his wife welcomed baby Caitlyn Darianne Ling in 2016.

"The doctors performed a Caesarean section due to my wife's high-blood pressure. She delivered a healthy but premature baby at 34 weeks, weighing 1.758kg.

"Our daughter was very tiny. But amazingly, she did not need any feeding or breathing tube. She came out very strong."

If the couple had given up on

their baby six years ago, Ling and Tay would not have been able to see their daughter's face.

"If my wife and I had given up hope, we would have never seen our daughter grow up big and healthy.

"We shouldn't give up. If we give up, everything is over already," Ling said.

He said his daughter is now 5 years old and growing well.

After the pregnancy, Ling de-

ecided to donate one of his kidneys to his wife.

"I wanted to give her a better life and a chance to care for our daughter and for our daughter to have a healthy mother.

"I did my check-up for the renal transplant in November 2018. The good news was that we matched for a transplant.

"It was quite a miracle. My left kidney was a 98 per cent match and the right was 99 per cent."

The couple underwent a seven-hour transplant in 2019, which was a success.

Ling took four days to recover and was told to take care of himself by eating healthily and exercising regularly.

"After a few months, my wife did her first biopsy and the result showed no rejection (of the kidney) at all.

"As for me, my kidney is working very well.

"I had a chance to give her a better life and I would do it again. If I didn't, who else would? If I didn't do it in 2019, then when?

"As we grow older, more risks will appear. What I want to share with everyone here is that it is very important for us as caretakers not to give up because our loved ones depend on us the most.

"If we give up, they have no one to depend on."

Ling said being a caretaker required strength not only to take care of their loved ones, but also to show moral support.

"My wife always reminds me to smile and be thankful.

"I realise that if I keep showing a face full of anxiety or if I'm always stressed, she will feel worse.

"As a caretaker, we should try our best to be strong and supportive for them."