

“ Life is a journey”

Every journey comes to an end and the same is true for every life.

However the end of a life can be the beginning of a new life.

Diethard Monbaliu, Abdominal Transplant Surgeon, University Hospitals Leuven, Belgium

Each year more than thousand Belgian patients are informed that they have an end- stage organ disease and that an organ transplantation is their only chance of survival.

Transplantation presents both physical and mental challenges. But after a successful transplantation people are able to live a quite normal life again. A healthy lifestyle and regular physical activity can have a positive influence on the long-term results of transplantation.

The “Transplantoux Foundation” was started in 2008 at the Catholic University Leuven and the University Hospitals Leuven, Belgium by Professor D. Monbaliu. Every Two years the Foundation sponsors a cycling or hiking trip up the Mont Ventoux, France with the goal of reaching the top. Recognizing that a successful organ transplant is a tribute to both the organ donor and his family.

The Foundation aims to:(i) organize positive awareness actions about organ transplantation ; (ii) motivate transplant patients to exercise and participate in sports in a healthy way and (iii) stimulate interdisciplinary scientific research to improve the long-term outcome after organ transplantation.

On Saturday June 17 th 2017 245 participants, all members of the Transplantoux Foundation, headed to the Mont Ventoux in France. A group of 100 transplant recipients including heart, kidney, liver, intestine and lung transplants, medical staff and family members hiked or cycled to the top at 1909 meters altitude. This 20 kilometers (14 mile) journey took 3- 7 hours and covered a height difference of 900 meters.

The attached picture celebrates the hikers group’s achievement of successfully reaching the top of Mont Ventoux.

This year’s event was a great success and this is not the end. We hope to inspire more organ recipients to start a healthy life style.

The way to the top is more important than the top itself and everybody’s top is at a different height!

For more information concerning this project please contact Sabine Gryp, Head nurse Heart Transplantation, University hospitals Leuven, Belgium (Sabine.gryp@uzleuven.be).

