

## Looking for an Appellation for the Kidney

In a recent encounter with one of our neurologists at our Centre in Lagos, an argument ensued on which organ is more important; the brain or the kidney? From the neurologist's point of view, the brain is more important to the body and that is why it is placed where it is very much protected on top of the body!! No human being can function without a brain. Valid and possibly true as the points are, a second look would have made it clear that no human being can function without a heart, lungs or kidney. Where else offers better protection than the retroperitoneal location of the kidney? Trauma from the front is absorbed by the intestines and those from the back, by the big vertebrae. The kidneys' prime position in the body could better be appreciated by acknowledging the fact that its blood supply rate is higher than that of the brain!! More interesting is the outcome of a successful brain transplantation, which would produce some interesting disasters. (A living donor would be dead at the end of the operation, a dead recipient would be transformed to a living stranger and the transplant team would end up in prison for manslaughter.) We concluded by jokingly arriving at the conclusion that the brain must have been accidentally placed on top of the body. Reflecting on peoples' perception of organs, the kidney appears not to have been noticeable. The heart is our favourite. For instance a person could have a warmhearted reception, could be tender hearted, or have a lion's heart. Hearts' could also be broken, could bleed, and could turn into stone or any other thing for that matter while the person is still alive. The heart is loved by everybody.

Same thing could be said of the liver. bold and endearing by design. Of the brain, of course none of us would deny having a sharp brain, our school records are there for attestation.

The kidney is totally different, sitting quietly in the retroperitoneal space, ensuring that the internal milieu is kept optimal for other organs to function, and regulating a lot of other processes in the body. Just like a beautiful woman sitting at a corner in the dark, no one seems to notice. From birth till the end of life, *as a hero in our body*, our kidney keeps on going. Who would sing its song aloud? Of course, it is the nephrology community.

**The 2016 World Kidney Day** is a knocking on our doors, let us come together to celebrate the kidney.

Long live our kidneys

**Dr. J.O. Awobusuyi**

*Editor*