



Coaches Corner personality Don Cherry was given a National Recognition Award yesterday morning at the Kidney Foundation of Canada's 50th anniversary breakfast at the Mississauga Convention Centre. Presenting is Kidney Foundation national executive director Paul Shay. Staff photo by Iain Colpitts

## Cherry recognized by Kidney Foundation

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When Tim Cherry had a bump on his foot as a 15-year-old, his father, longtime Mississauga resident and Coaches Corner personality Don Cherry didn't think much about it at first.

He figured his son had sustained while playing around, doing basic kid stuff, but shortly after, the family was in for a shock when they found out Tim had been diagnosed with kidney disease.

"I took a look at it and I said it must be from your running shoes or something," said the elder Cherry, a guest of honour at yesterday morning's Kidney foundation of Canada's 50th anniversary breakfast at the Mississauga Convention Centre.

"Then the next day, he said it was really hurting so I said we'd better go to the hospital. Then we get a phone call and they said it was his kidneys and that just came out of the blue. Like most people, I had no idea about kidney failure or what dialysis meant and stuff like that."

Cherry was coaching the Boston Bruins in the late 1970s when his son was diagnosed. He remembers having to go to Massachusetts General Hospital every other day for dialysis treatments before his wife Rose said someone in the family was going to donate a kidney.

"The doctor said there was a lot of people who wouldn't give their kidney and that was beyond my comprehension," Cherry said.

"We had a test and found out I was good, Rose was good, but (daughter) Cindy was a perfect match, which was hard to believe because they don't look alike."

Cindy, now a National Development Officer with the Kidney Foundation, was 21 when the siblings underwent the operation. They've been healthy ever since.

Tim is now a film and video producer as well as an OHL scout who can often be found with his dad assessing talent at minor hockey games in the GTA.

"He's been in dressing rooms since he was a year old in diapers," Cherry said.

"We've seen players like (Steven) Stamkos and (Connor) McDavid since they were in bantam ... We see all these guys before anybody, so we know what they did in junior and know where they should be drafted. You have to know their character through two years, know how they react after a loss, their body language and stuff like that."

Cherry was one of six National Recognition Award recipients at the breakfast.

He was given the Kidney Foundation of Canada Fund Development Award for continuously putting his best foot forward in an effort to help fight kidney disease.

He feels there's a pressing need to create awareness since Canada has one of the worst records for organ donation in the Western world.