2/4/10
"30 Rock" Star Needs Kidney Transplant
CNN: Larry King Live

KING: Joining us in New York, Grizzwald "Grizz" Chapman. He was a member of the cast of the very popular NBC show, "30 Rock." He plays "Grizz," which was part of Tracy Morgan's character's entourage.

In real life, he is undergoing dialysis waiting for a kidney transplant.

And with him is Kevin Brown, who plays "Dot Com," another member of Tracy Morgan's character's entourage, on "30 Rock." In real life, they are good friends, he and "Grizz".

Now, Grizzwald, how long did this -- when did this kidney problem start?

GRIZZWALD CHAPMAN, "30 ROCK" STAR NEEDS KIDNEY TRANSPLANT: Well, I got diagnosed with hypertension about -- I was about 24 years old. And I was immature and really didn't pay attention to, you know, what -- what the doctors told me. But in -- in a sense, the doctors didn't explain the seriousness of hypertension.

And, you know, no one told me that it was going to affect my kidneys. And, you know, I could -- I could end up having diabetes and things of that nature.

KING: What were you supposed to do that you didn't do that might have prevented this?

CHAPMAN: Well, the first thing, I could have -- I could have kept my weight down.

Secondly, I could have -- it could have saw the signs, you know, because, you know, every -- every person has a bunch of signs that they -- that they get. And, you know, some of the signs are swelling of the ankles; you know, a metallic taste in your mouth; you know, things like that.

KING: Yes.

CHAPMAN: And I could have -- you know, I -- I could have just tooken the medicine. But, you know, nobody -- nobody really explained it to me.

KING: Yes. How long -- how long have you been on dialysis?

CHAPMAN: I've been on dialysis right now about two years.

KING: What is it, every other day?

CHAPMAN: I go three times a week at -- excuse me. I go three times a week at three-and-a-half - - no. I go three times a week, four-and-a-half hours a day at the DaVita Dialysis Center.

KING: Kevin, how is your friend doing?
KEVIN BROWN, DOT COM ON "30 ROCK," CHAPMAN'S FRIEND: Well, my friend's doing quite well, believe it or not. But before I answer the question, Tracy Morgan dared me to call you liar. So, liar, my friend -- my friend is hanging in there.

KING: OK.

OK, Kev.

(LAUGHTER)

BROWN: Yes, liar. So my friend is...

KING: Kev, you're not able to give -- you're not able to give your friend one of your kidneys?

BROWN: Well, you know what, we haven't gotten to that point yet, you know? The point that we were at for the last, I guess, year now, is getting "Grizz" to the right weight, where the doctors would even agree to do the surgery.

Are you following what I'm saying?

KING: Ah.

BROWN: So that was the big thing...

KING: So, "Grizz," you have to be lighter in order to get a kidney?

CHAPMAN: Yes.

KING: Grizz?

CHAPMAN: When I -- when I -- when I first came down with -- with the sickness, I was -- currently, I was 505 pounds. And they will not...

KING: Whoo.

CHAPMAN: ...I repeat, they will not do the kidney transplant at that weight. So I had to -- I had to, you know, bring myself down to a reasonable weight, anywhere from 300 to 350 pounds, in order to have the -- the kidney transplant.

KING: What are you now?

CHAPMAN: I'm actually right now at 350.

KING: Kevin, if you -- what do you -- what do you have to match, blood type?

What has to match to make someone a kidney donor?

BROWN: Well, from -- from what I understand, they do like three months of extensive testing. So it's just a matter of, you know, getting the opportunity to, you know, go through whatever --
Whatever phases. But it's not -- it's not a simple thing. I don't think it's as simple as, hey, his blood is this and his blood is that and we just, you know, do the transplant.

**KING:** All right.

Would you be a donor if you could be a donor?

**BROWN:** Well, you know what, yes. I have -- I have absolutely considered it. And, you know, we -- we've really just got to see, you know. We've got to see if I'm healthy enough, because, you know, "Grizz" just sort of spoke over the being the 500 pounds when we met. And that was in 2006 when we first met doing the -- the pilot of "30 Rock."

And we both had problems, you know, with our weight. I wasn't as -- you know, I wasn't as heavy as he was, but for him to get down and lose 150 pounds was very impressive. And I wanted to join him in his struggle to lose the weight. So I recently started Nutrisystem just so I could lose the weight and sort of, you know, give him that moral support -- hey, you're not the only one trying to lose the weight, I'm trying to lose it.

**KING:** Yes.

Well, "Grizz" -- "Grizz," have you got other people who are desirous of giving you one of their kidneys?

**CHAPMAN:** Well, I had a few people. After -- after I did the -- after I did the -- "The Dr. Oz Show," a bunch of people came out and was willing to give me a kidney. But, you know, like Kevin said, at that point, I wasn't the weight. So now this is...

**KING:** But now you are.

**CHAPMAN:** Now -- now I am. So now it's just a process of getting the right person to -- to donate the kidney, because being that I'm -- I'm a larger -- I'm a larger man, you know, I just can't take a smaller person's kidney, because everybody's...

**KING:** I'll bet.

**CHAPMAN:** ...kidney is the size of their -- the size of their fist. And, you know, you see here, I have a -- I have a pretty big fist. So I'm going to need a pretty big -- you know, a decent sized kidney.

**KING:** A pretty big kidney.

**CHAPMAN:** Yes.

**KING:** What happens if "Grizz" doesn't get one?

That's our scenario.

And that's next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

**KING:** "Grizz" Chapman, what happens if you don't get a kidney?
**CHAPMAN:** Well, if I don't get a kidney, I'll be on dialysis for the rest of my life.

**KING:** And that can be trying, can it not?

**CHAPMAN:** It's -- it's definitely trying. You know -- you know, some days, you know, I'll be so tired, you know, after -- after the dialysis. It just -- it just drains your body so much. That's why -- you know, that was one of the biggest reasons why I came out to bring awareness to the situation, because there's so many people -- there's 26 million people walking around today that have chronic kidney disease and they're not even aware of it.

So, you know, I just...

**KING:** Yes.

**CHAPMAN:** ...I just felt, you know, if I have my 15 seconds of fame, I can come out and I can -- I can tell my community, you know, go out, get yourself checked. You know, the National Kidney Foundation, they'll -- they'll -- they'll check -- they'll check you for free. They have a program called the KEEP Program. You know, this is kidney -- it's Kidneys Early Evaluation Program. And you can go on Kidney.org and you can go on Kidney.org...

**KING:** Kidney.org?

**CHAPMAN:** You can go on Kidney.org...

**KING:** All right...

**CHAPMAN:** ...and you can check out, in your community, where they'll test you for free.

**KING:** To go.

Kevin is the cast is -- is Tina Fey, Alec Baldwin, all the rest, getting behind "Grizz" in this?

**BROWN:** Well, absolutely. You know, what we found out was one of the brothers of one of the executive producers has kidney issues, also. So they did an episode -- I think it was season three -- where it was a kidney telethon or something like that. So one of the things that we were concerned about when "Grizz" first found out that this had happened was, how is the show going to act?

How are going to treat him?

Are they going to let him get the time to go do his dialysis?

But before we found out, they told us we were part of the family and they really stuck by that, you know?

Whenever he has to go do his dialysis or has an appointment or something like that, they will juggle the schedule and give him all the time he needs to get...

**KING:** That's great.

**BROWN:** ...you know, proper medical attention. Tina is great. Alec is great. Tracy's great. They've all been very supportive.
KING: People watching, "Grizz," who may want to offer help, may want to offer a kidney, who do they contact?

CHAPMAN: You can contact the National Kidney Foundation or you can go on Kidney.org. They have, you know, all the information there and they'll take you...

KING: They know all about you?

CHAPMAN: Repeat that?

KING: They know all about you?

Supposing a very heavy-set person wants to volunteer to be tested on giving you a kidney. He or she could contact that foundation?

CHAPMAN: Yes, they can contact the National Kidney Foundation or they can go to their local hospitals and, you know, they'll -- they'll take care of you.

KING: They know your case?

BROWN: Can I jump in, Larry?

KING: Yes, quickly, Kev. BROWN: You can also contact NBC. NBC knows how to find us, if you want to offer a kidney.

KING: All right. That's simple.

(CROSSTALK)

BROWN: Yes.

KING: All right. Go to NBC.

BROWN: NBC.com.

KING: They'll take your call.

BROWN: NBC.com, yes, and say I want to give "Grizz" a kidney.

KING: All right, "Grizz" a kidney, NBC.com. Let's get in line.

Grizzwald "Grizz" Chapman and Kevin Brown, you love them on the show, why not help them now?