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Newsday

1/11/97

King's Killer Needs Liver

James Earl Ray, imprisoned in Tennessee for assassinating Martin Luther King Jr., needs a liver transplant, his lawyer said yesterday, and a search is on for a donor to circumvent the normal transplant process.

Ray, 68, who is serving a 99-year sentence, has been hospitalized outside prison twice recently with chronic liver disease. He has been back in a state prison hospital since Jan. 3.

Though prison officials refused to discuss his condition, his lawyer, William Pepper, said Ray will die within months without a transplant.