

Transplant for Ray Urged

A liver transplant could extend James Earl Ray's life up to 10 years, and he appears to be a reasonable candidate for such surgery, a transplant surgeon says.

"Without it, he will surely die," Dr. John Fung of The University of Pittsburgh Medical Center said in the letter dated Aug. 4, adding that he gives Ray four to six months to live if he doesn't get a liver transplant.

Ray, 69, confessed in 1969 to killing Martin Luther King Jr. in Memphis, Tenn., the previous year. But he has been trying to take back his guilty plea ever since. His failing health has added urgency to arguments that he should be given a trial.

NEWSDAY, THURSDAY, AUGUST 28, 1997