

You can help up to 50 people-

All you need to do is say YES to organ and tissue donation on your donor card and/or driver's license and DISCUSS your decision with your family.

Read on to learn more. Someday you could be a lifesaver for someone in need.

Why consider donating your organs & tissues?

A few very good reasons:
As of June 2001, Approximately 77,000 people in the U. S. were on the national waiting list for an organ.

An average of 15 people die every day because not enough organs are available.

Organ and tissue transplantation saves lives. For example, about 60 people receive life-enhancing organ transplants each day and about 82 percent of patients who receive a donated kidney are still alive 5 years later.

Organ & Tissue
DONATION
It's a Way of Life

What organs can be transplanted?

Donated kidneys, hearts, lungs, livers, pancreases, and intestines can be transplanted.

What tissues can be transplanted?

Blood vessels, bone, bone marrow, connective tissue, corneas, heart valves, middle ears, and skin are among the tissues that can be transplanted.

Who decides who receives donated organs?

The Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network matches donated organs with critically ill patients on the national waiting list. Medical urgency, compatibility of blood chemistries, and body size are considerations in making the match.

Does the donor family meet the recipient?

Most donor families are told the age, sex, occupation, and other general characteristics of the recipient. If both the donor family and the recipient agree, they may exchange names, correspond, and even meet.

Must I have medical tests to register as an organ and tissue donor?

No testing is needed before you sign a donor card or designate "organ donor" on your driver's license. At the time of donation organs are tested for infectious diseases, including HIV. Only healthy organs are actually transplanted.

Will I receive less aggressive medical treatment because I am willing to be a donor?

No. Your own physicians do everything possible to save your life. Only after they determine that further efforts would be futile does a transplant team become involved.

What if members of my family oppose donation?

The best way to ensure your wishes are carried out is to tell your family how strongly you feel about being an organ and tissue donor. You also should sign and carry a donor card, designate "organ donor" on your driver's license, and record your wishes in legal documents.

Does organ donation leave a body disfigured?

Donation does not change the appearance of the body for the funeral service.

How much will organ donation cost my family?

Nothing. All costs related to donation are paid by recipients and their health insurance. Your family pays only for the medical care provided before death and funeral expenses.

Are there religious objections to organ and tissue donation?

Most major religions in the U.S. support donation as a gift of life to fellow human beings.

 **Organ/Tissue Donor Card** 

I wish to donate my organs and tissues. I wish to give:

any needed organs and tissues only the following organs and tissues:

Donor Signature _____ Date _____

Witness _____

Witness _____

 **Organ/Tissue Donor Card** 

I wish to donate my organs and tissues. I wish to give:

any needed organs and tissues only the following organs and tissues:

Donor Signature _____ Date _____

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What People Say About Organ & Tissue Donation

"I was privileged to be part of their decision, their generosity, their gift of life, their ultimate gesture of humanity."

Dr. Kenneth Moritsugu, who honored the wishes of his wife Donna Lee and his daughter Vikki by donating their organs and tissues after they died in separate car accidents. Their donations helped 13 people.

"It is just like when you plan for a child's birth. You need to plan for that time when you pass on. Discuss organ donation with your family. Make a commitment. Get your organ donor card and understand that you are going to make a difference in many, many, people's lives. You have a chance to save lives."

Olympic Track Gold Medal Winner Carl Lewis, who became an advocate and educator about organ and tissue donation when the sister of a close friend needed a liver transplant.

"By a simple decision, a bereaved family can either save other families from the devastation they themselves are going through or condemn them to a lifetime of sorrow. Knowing that, I often wonder how any other decision is possible."

Reg and Maggie Green, who donated the organs of their seven-year-old son Nicholas who was killed by robbers while vacationing in Italy.

"My son has saved six people's lives. I wish I could save so many lives."

Dr. Alfredo Herrera, who honored his 16-year-old son's wishes by donating his organs after he died in a car accident. His son had indicated on his driver's license

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When You've Made the Decision to Become an Organ and Tissue Donor, Here's What To Do.

Sign the organ and tissue donor card included in this brochure, and carry it in your wallet or purse at all times. Have two people witness your signature, preferably family members.

If you have a driver's license, find out from your local motor vehicle department how you can indicate on it that you want to be an organ and tissue donor.

Tell your family members that you have decided to become an organ and tissue donor so they will understand your wishes and support them.

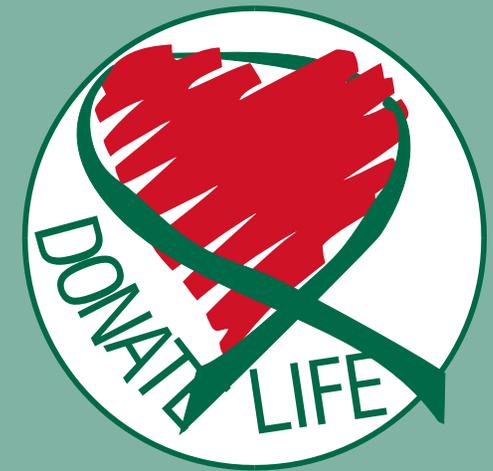
If you are under age 18, you may need to take additional steps to make a valid donation declaration.

Approximately 77,000 people are waiting for organs. Sign an organ and tissue donor card today!

For more information, visit the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services web site at www.organdonor.gov or call: 1.888.Ask.HRSA

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Organ/Tissue Donor Card

Please share your wishes with your family.



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Tommy G. Thompson
Secretary
U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services