



## Donation & Transplantation FAQs

### **Who can be a donor?**

People of all ages and medical histories should consider themselves potential donors. Your medical condition at the time of death will determine what organs and tissues can be donated.

A national system matches available organs from the donor with people on the waiting list based on blood type, body size, how sick they are, donor distance, tissue type and time on the list. Sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, race, income, celebrity and social status are never considered.

### **Does registering as a donor change my patient care?**

Your life always comes first. Doctors work hard to save every patient's life, but sometimes there is a complete and permanent loss of brain function. The patient is declared clinically and legally dead. Only then is donation an option.

It is important to know that the hospital care team does not know the patient's donor status. The hospital contacts the local organ procurement organization (OPO), which evaluates the individual's medical history and checks the donor registry. If the person is registered, the OPO will inform and support the family. If not, the family will be asked if they would like to authorize donation. For all organ, eye and tissue donation, the donor is treated with care and respect, and the donor family is supported throughout the donation process..

### **Does my religion support organ, eye and tissue donation?**

All major religions support donation as a final act of compassion and generosity. Learn more about different religious views on organ donation at [DonateLife.net/organ-donation-and-religion](http://DonateLife.net/organ-donation-and-religion).

### **Is there a cost to be an organ, eye and tissue donor?**

There is no cost to the donor's family or estate for donation. The donor family pays only for medical expenses before death and costs associated with funeral arrangements.

### **Can someone who identifies as LGBTQ+ become an organ, eye or tissue donor?**

Sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression does not prevent someone from registering as an organ donor. Certain regulations mandated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) may affect a person's eligibility for cornea and tissue donation.

### **Can someone who is living with HIV be an organ donor?**

Passed in 2015, the [HIV Organ Policy Equity Act \(HOPE\) Act](#) provides donation and transplantation opportunities for people living with HIV. More than 350 lifesaving transplants have been made possible because of the HOPE Act and the generosity of donors and donor families.

### **Does my social and/or financial status play any part in whether I will receive an organ if I ever need one?**

No. A national system matches available organs from the donor with people on the waiting list based on blood type, body size, how sick they are, donor distance, tissue type and time on the waiting list. Race, income, gender, orientation, celebrity and social status are never considered.

### **Why should I register my decision to be a donor?**

The vast majority of Americans support donation as an opportunity to give life and health to others. Unfortunately, many people overlook the important step of registering their decision to be a donor. Donors often die suddenly and unexpectedly. Donation can provide solace to a family and relieve the burden of making the donation decision in a time of grief and shock.

You can save up to 8 lives through organ donation, restore sight to 2 people through cornea donation, and heal more than 75 people through tissue donation.\* Your registration serves as a symbol of hope to patients waiting and sharing it with your family lets them know your decision.

*\*Living donation and VCA are not included in your deceased donor registration.*

### **I want to learn more about living donation. Where should I look?**

Living organ donation offers another choice for some transplant candidates, reducing their time on the waiting list and leading to better long-term outcomes for the recipient. Living tissue donation – birth tissue – is used to promote healing and to treat burns and painful wounds. Learn more at [DonateLife.net/livingdonation](http://DonateLife.net/livingdonation).

**Go to [RegisterMe.org](http://RegisterMe.org) to register your decision to be an organ, eye and tissue donor. Learn more about organ, eye, tissue and living donation at [DonateLife.net](http://DonateLife.net).**