

## Frequently Asked Questions About Organ and Tissue Donation

### Who can become a donor?

Everyone should consider himself or herself to be a potential organ and tissue donor. Your medical condition at the time of death will determine what organs and tissues can be donated.



### What organs and tissues can I donate?

Needed organs include the heart, kidneys, pancreas, lungs, liver and intestines. Tissue that can be donated to help others includes the eyes, skin, bone, heart valves and tendons.

### Will my decision to become an organ and tissue donor affect the quality of my medical care?

No. Organ and tissue recovery takes place only after all efforts to save your life have been exhausted and death has been legally declared. The doctors working to save your life are entirely different from the medical team that would be involved in recovering your organs and tissues.

### Will donation disfigure my body? Can there still be an open casket funeral?

Donation will neither disfigure the body nor change the way it looks in a casket.

### Are there any costs to my family for donation?

No. Donation costs nothing to the donor's family or estate. The donor's family is responsible for hospital charges not involved with the donation, and the donor's funeral arrangements.

### Does my religion approve of donation?

All major religions approve of organ and tissue donation and consider it a gift, an act of charity.

### What will happen to my donated organs and tissues?

The patients who will receive your organs and tissues will be chosen based upon many factors, such as blood type and medical matching. A national system is in place to ensure the fair distribution of organs in the United States. The buying and selling of organs is against the law.

### How should I share my decision?

Remember, it's important for your family to support your commitment. Begin by telling them that they are an important part of a very personal decision that you want to share with them. Explain to them why you have chosen to be a donor. Tell them how one person can really make a difference in the lives of many. Explain how one donor can potentially help more than 50 other people. Donation can dramatically improve-even save-the lives of those suffering from organ failure, bone defects, burns or blindness. Tragically, thousands of people die each year from a lack of donors.