



Fact Sheet: Common Questions

When it comes to organ, eye and tissue donation – there are many commonly asked questions. Find the facts and get the answers below!



Who can register to donate?

Every individual has the right to sign up to donate their organs, eyes and tissues at the time of their death. Anyone can register. Your age is not a factor. In fact, the oldest organ donor was 92!



What does joining the Donor Registry mean?

When you register as an organ, eye and tissue donor you are making a legal decision* that will be honored after your death. It's important to talk with your family so they can be aware and prepared to honor your decision.

* Legal decision for individuals 18 and up



What if my family doesn't agree?

Donor Designation is a legal and binding decision for ages 18 and over. Legal guardians and parents of minors have the right to refuse donation even if a person under the age of 18 is a registered donor.



What if I don't document my decision?

If you don't decide prior to your death whether or not you want to become an organ, eye and tissue donor, your loved ones will have the opportunity to make that decision on your behalf. Therefore, it is incredibly important to document and share your decision with your loved ones.



What if my family wants an open casket?

Organ, eye and tissue donors are heroes and are treated as such. The medical professionals who perform the recovery surgeries treat donors with the utmost respect, just like they would for any other patient. If you and your family were planning on an open casket funeral or viewing, these plans should not be affected by donation.



How does the waiting list work?

When it comes to waiting for an organ transplant, we are all created equal. Wealthy or famous individuals cannot and do not get preference on the national transplant waiting list. Factors such as blood type, body size, location, severity of illness and length of time on the waiting list are used to determine the best candidate for an organ.

Waiting list factors include:



Blood type



Body size



Severity of patient's medical condition



The patient's waiting time



Distance between the donor's hospital and the patient's hospital



Whether the patient is healthy enough for surgery



How many people are waiting for a transplant in the U.S.?

Nationwide, there are over 100,000 people waiting for a life-saving organ transplant and more than 3,000 of those people are right here in Minnesota.



How many people can a single donor help heal and save?

One person can save and heal more than 75 lives through organ, eye and tissue donation. In some cases, tissue donation can increase this number significantly.



How do I register as a donor?

You can register as a donor online at DonateLifeMidwest.org, by mail, at the DMV when you get your permit or drivers license, or even through the iPhone Health app.

For more information, visit www.donatelifemidwest.org