



Fact Sheet: Myths vs. Facts

There are many common misconceptions about organ, eye and tissue donation. Read below to get the facts and set the record straight!



Myth:
I'm too old to be a donor.

Fact:
People of all ages and medical histories should consider themselves as potential donors. Your medical condition at the time of passing will determine what organs and tissue can be donated. Most health conditions do not prevent donation and age is not a factor. In fact, the oldest organ donor ever was 92 and the oldest eye donor in Minnesota was 107!



Myth:
I'm not healthy enough to be a donor.

Fact:
Even with an illness or a health condition, you may be able to donate your organs and tissue upon death. At the time of death, doctors determine whether you are medically suitable for donation, and there are only a few conditions that would absolutely prevent a person from becoming a donor—such as active cancer or a systemic infection. Even people with diabetes, HIV, hepatitis and cancer CAN sometimes donate their organs.



Myth:
Donation is against my religion.

Fact:
All major religions in the United States support donation and consider it to be a generous and compassionate act of caring. Donation organizations coordinate with families and hospitals to make sure donors' beliefs, practices and ceremonies are always respected.



Myth:

Organs are matched by race and ethnicity.

Fact:

Although organs are not matched by race and ethnicity, and people of different races frequently match one another, all individuals waiting for an organ transplant will have a better chance of receiving one if there are large numbers of donors from their racial or ethnic background. This is because compatible blood types and tissue markers—critical qualities for donor and recipient matching—are more likely to be found among members of the same ethnicity. A greater diversity of donors may potentially increase access to transplantation for everyone.



Myth:

Donation is expensive.

Fact:

When it comes to donation, there is no cost to your family or loved ones. If you decide to be an organ, eye and tissue donor, the medical expenses associated with the donation will be covered.



Myth:

If I'm a registered donor, they won't try as hard to save my life.

Fact:

If you are taken to the hospital after an accident or injury, it is the hospital's number one priority to save YOUR life. Your status as a donor is not considered until every effort has been made to try to save your life. To be considered for organ donation, a patient must be on a ventilator and either declared brain dead or suffer cardiac death.