

The Facts about Organ and Tissue Donation



Ohio Statistics

- One Ohioan dies every other day waiting for a life-saving transplant.
- Over 3,000 Ohioans are waiting for a life-saving transplant at any given time, with 78 percent waiting for a kidney transplant due to end-stage kidney disease.
- Hundreds of additional Ohioans are in need of cornea and tissue transplants.
- Each year, more than 1,600 Ohioans could have their sight restored through cornea transplants and thousands more could benefit from tissue transplants, including skin, bone, tendons, ligaments, vessels, heart valves, nerves and middle ear bones.
- Just over half of all Ohioans have registered to become organ and tissue donors.

General Facts

- Over 106,000 people in the United States are waiting for a life-saving transplant.
- A single donor can save up to eight lives through organ donation and improve the lives of up to 50 people through tissue and eye donation.
- Organs and tissue can be donated, including the heart, liver, kidneys, lungs, pancreas, intestine, skin, bone, tendons, ligaments, vessels, heart valves, nerves, middle ear bones and eyes (cornea).
- Nationally, African-Americans and other minorities make up about 20 percent of the population, but slightly more than 50 percent of the waiting list for organ transplants is composed of minorities.
- The matching of organs to recipients is coordinated through the United Network for Organ Sharing and is based strictly on medical criteria to ensure the organ goes to the person who needs it most.
- The need for donors is so great because of all total hospital deaths, less than one percent are eligible for organ donation, usually the result of brain death from a traumatic injury.

Answers to Common Misperceptions about Organ Donation

- Becoming a donor does NOT affect the level of medical care a person will receive in the case of a medical emergency. Furthermore, doctors working to save a person's life are separate from the medical team involved in the transplant process.
- Costs related to donation are not paid for by the donor's family. The organ/tissue recovery agencies or the transplant center pay all costs related to the donation. Hospital expenses incurred before the donation of organs in attempts to save the donor's life, as well as funeral expenses, remain the responsibility of the donor's family.
- All major religions support organ and tissue donation as the ultimate act of charity. If concerns arise about a particular religion's view on donation, a person should consult a minister, pastor, rabbi or other religious leader.
- Regardless of a person's age or medical history, anyone can still be an organ, eye or tissue donor. The decision to use a person's organs, eye or tissue is based on strict medical criteria, not age.
- A donor can have an open-casket funeral. Great care is taken to preserve the natural appearance of the donor following the recovery of organs, eyes or tissue.

What Is Do It Now!™?

Do It Now!™ is a statewide campaign to create excitement, build awareness and ultimately encourage Ohioans to join the Ohio Donor Registry as a new organ, eye and tissue donor. The theme Do It Now! was chosen to place emphasis on the urgency for individuals to register.

The goal for the 2010 campaign is to add 240,000 new donors to the Ohio Donor Registry. Meeting this goal can give life to nearly two million individuals.

What Is the Green Chair Campaign?

Why a chair? Because of the universal way it communicates family, personality, conversation and life. Most people can vividly picture mom or dad's chair from childhood. Often we had to ask permission just to sit in one of them. And if someone in the family passed away, the loneliness of that empty chair could be overwhelming.

At the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, Archie and Edith Bunker's chairs from the classic TV show "All in the Family" are enshrined in a glass display. Seeing the chairs immediately recalls the characters and their personalities, just as it does in real life.



In essence, a favorite chair represents the comforts of home. Where we go to relax and unwind. To live. It is a fitting symbol of the purpose of Donate Life Ohio: to transform loss into new life; to bring hope and comfort to those in desperate need; and to stimulate conversation about organ, eye and tissue donation.

What Is the Second Chance Trust Fund?

Through contributions made by individuals at Ohio's BMVs while renewing their Ohio driver's licenses, the Second Chance Trust Fund finances educational and action-oriented campaigns like the Do It Now! program. A \$1 contribution supports donation education in Ohio and gives hope to thousands of Ohioans waiting for a second chance through organ, eye and tissue donation.

What Is Donate Life Ohio?

Donate Life Ohio is a coalition of the state's organ, eye and tissue recovery agencies dedicated to educating Ohioans about the need for organ, eye and tissue donation. In this effort to increase donor registrations, they are joined by the Ohio Departments of Health and Public Safety and the Minority Organ and Tissue Transplant Education Program. For more information, please visit www.donatelifehio.org.

