

Organ Donation

“There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” John 15:13 NLT

How much thought have you given to how you can help others? Organ and tissue donation is one way to offer help. It can be as simple as donating a pint of blood every 6 months or as complicated as donating a kidney to a relative. Even at death you have an opportunity to share life-giving measures since thousands of people across the country wait every day for another chance at life through organ donation.

Through multiple tissue and organ donation, one donor has the potential to help from 1 to over 35 people. Some common organs that are removed include the heart, eyes, skin, bones, liver, lungs, and kidneys. The people waiting for these organs suffer from conditions like heart disease, kidney disease, cancer or accident reconstruction surgery, corneal damage, incurable lung diseases, and even curvature of the spine. A donation of bone, tissue, or organ is their only chance at a better quality of life.

Although approximately 90% of Americans say they support organ donation, waiting lists continue to grow because the availability of organs and tissue is extremely low. Only 35% of those who support donation have taken steps to do so and about a third of them do not donate because of family dissention or misunderstandings. Many times the problem is the misunderstanding that donating organs creates a cost to the donor family and prevents the option of an open casket at the funeral. Neither is true.

Educating people about organ donation is an important part of the solution. If you choose to be an organ donor, discuss it with your family. Help them understand why it is important to you and how it can help others. Most all religions approve of some type of organ and tissue donation and see it as a gift to humanity. Act now and become a donor. Talk with your family today about this important act of faith, hope, and love.

(Source: US Dept. of Health and Human Services www.organdonor.gov)

References / Resources:

www.donatelife.net – information about the donation / transplant process, how to recruit donors, and (by state) on how to be a donor – survival stories are included

www.Mayoclinic.com/health/organ-donation/FL00077 – debunks the 10 most common myths surrounding organ donation

www.organtransplants.org/resources/ - educational resources for K-12 on organ donation/transplantation, links to organizations / resources, survival stories, and facts

www.giftofhope.org/NDS - National donor Sabbath – various religious viewpoints on organ donation, prayers, scriptures, and Sacred Text to be used for faith communities and worship (select from the side bar menu)

<http://gbgm-umc.org/health/organdonor> - worship resources and downloadable PDF organ/tissue donor card from the United Methodist Church

www.transplantforlife.org – an interfaith organ donation organization that builds awareness in religious communities of the shortfall of life-sustaining transplants

