



Organ, Eye, and Tissue Donation Guide 2008

Statistics and Data

Nearly 100,000

Nearly 100,000 people in the United States are waiting for a life-saving organ transplant, including almost 1,500 of our Northwest neighbors.

18

Sadly, 18 people die each day waiting for a life-saving organ transplant.

50

One organ and tissue donor can save or enhance the lives of over 50 people.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who can be a registered organ, eye, and tissue donor?

While age and medical history are factors, almost anyone can be an organ, eye, and tissue donor. Decisions about medical suitability for donation are made, at the time of death, by professionally trained and experienced medical professionals.

How do I become a registered organ, eye, and tissue donor?

How to become a registered donor in WA, MT

- Register online at www.donatelifetoday.com
- Call toll-free at 1-877-275-5269 and request a brochure to fill out and return.
- Say YES to donation when renewing your driver's license. Residents who already have a heart on their driver's license are automatically added to the donor registry.

How to become a registered donor in AK

- Register online at www.alaskadonorregistry.org
- Call toll-free at 1-800-719-5443 and request a brochure to fill out and return.
- Say YES to donation when renewing your driver's license. Residents who already have a heart on their driver's license are automatically added to the Alaska Donor Registry.

How to become a registered donor in ID

- Register online at www.yesidaho.org
- Call the Idaho Donor Registry toll-free at 1-866-937-4324
- Say YES to donation when renewing your driver's license. Residents who already have the word DONOR on their driver's license are automatically added to the Idaho Donor Registry.

What organs, eyes, and tissues can be donated?

Organs that are transplantable include the heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, pancreas, and small intestine. Tissues that can be donated include corneas, skin, bone, heart valves, ligaments, tendons, and veins.

Can I set limitations on the organs, eyes, and tissues I would like to donate, or direct donation to a friend in need?

Saying yes to donation on your driver's license indicates your consent for all organs, eyes, and tissues, for transplant and research. If you'd like to set limits, such as ruling out specific organs, indicating transplant, research or both, you must either request a brochure or register online.

What if I change my mind?

Your most recent access to the registry, whether via your driver's license, brochure or online, is the information maintained in the registry. If you alter your record or decide to remove yourself, that will override any past information. To remove yourself from the registry, say no to donation when you renew your license or contact the registry agency in your area to request removal.

Where does organ donation happen?

Organ donation occurs at a medical facility, after death is declared and consent for donation is obtained from a documented donation decision or the deceased's next of kin. LifeCenter Northwest works with over 190 hospitals throughout our donor service area of Washington, Montana, Alaska, and North Idaho.

Does the donor's family incur the cost of donation?

There is no cost to the donor's family for organ, eye, and tissue donation. *All costs related to donation are paid by the donation agency.* Expenses related to saving the individual's life and funeral expenses remain the responsibility of the donor's family.

What if an individual registered to be a donor, but family is opposed to donation?

State and federal laws support the donor's rights. This means that if an individual has recorded their personal donation decision, it *must* be honored, whether in accordance with the wishes of their legal next of kin or not*. Information about their loved one's decision will be conveyed to the family members, and they will be supported throughout the donation process. Making sure your family is already aware of the donation decision helps to prevent more stress during their time of loss. Most families are happy to know their loved one had made a decision and want to follow through on their final wishes.

* If there is evidence that the person had changed their mind but had not documented their decision, this may be taken into account before proceeding with donation.

How is the organ allocation process determined?

When a patient needs a transplant, his or her name is added to the National Transplant Waiting List. United Network of Organ Sharing (UNOS), the organization in charge of the list, works with LifeCenter coordinators as organs become available for transplant. Through extensive testing, coordinators obtain information about blood type and genetic make-up for each transplantable organ. This information provides a list of suitable recipients, considering such factors as medical urgency, tissue type, length of time on the waiting list, blood type, and body size. There is no discrimination due to age, sex, race, membership, occupation or social and/or financial status when determining who receives an organ.

Where do transplants happen?

Transplants occur only at hospitals that specialize in transplant surgery. In this region, there are five transplant centers, each with programs specializing in different organs.

- Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center – kidney, heart, liver
- Sacred Heart Medical Center – heart, kidney
- Swedish Medical Center – kidney, pancreas
- University of Washington Medical Center – heart, lungs, liver, kidney, pancreas, small intestine
- Virginia Mason Medical Center – kidney, pancreas

Can the donor family meet the recipient(s)?

Organ, eye, and tissue donation is a confidential process. No pressure is placed on donor families or transplant recipients to meet or make contact with one another. LifeCenter Northwest and the transplant centers can arrange contact if the desire is mutual.

Will doctors still try hard to save a patient who they know is a registered donor?

There is no conflict between saving lives and using organs for transplantation. The doctors who work to save your life are not the same doctors involved in the recovery and transplantation. It is only after every attempt has been made to save your life – and death has been declared – that LifeCenter begins the organ donation process.

Can organs, eyes, and tissues be given to different racial groups or individuals of the opposite sex?

Gender does not influence the allocation of donated organs, eyes, or tissues. Although genetics does influence donation, and the shared gene structure of families can allow for a better match, race tends to be a small factor in donation. Cross-racial donations are very successful.

Are organs bought and sold on the black market?

According to the Uniform Anatomical Gift Act of 1984, human organs cannot be bought or sold in the United States. Violators are subject to fines and imprisonment. “Black market” sale is impossible because recovered organs must be rigorously tested to be appropriately matched to a fitting recipient. Organs are distributed according to national policy established and monitored by UNOS.

Are there religious objections to donation?

Most major Western religions support donation as a humanitarian act of giving. Transplantation is consistent with the life-preserving traditions of these faiths. Individuals are encouraged to consult their spiritual advisor with specific questions.

How can I become a living kidney donor?

If you know someone who needs a living donation, you should contact that person’s transplant center. If you do not have a specific patient in mind, you can contact any of the transplant centers in our region, they all have anonymous living kidney programs:

University of Washington Medical Center
206-598-3627

Swedish Medical Center
1-800-996-7426

Sacred Heart Medical Center
509-474-4500

Virginia Mason Medical Center
1-800-354-9527 ext. 11201

Are living kidney donations successful?

Living donor transplants can provide recipients with an excellent quality of life for years. The first living unrelated donation in the Northwest was performed at Swedish Medical Center, and more than 100 have been performed there since. At the University of Washington Medical Center, the living kidney donation success rates are above 95 percent. Completely matched sibling transplants often function well even after 25 years. Every year about 6,000 people give the generous gift of life as living donors.

How can I become a whole body donor?

Whole body donation is not a program at LifeCenter Northwest. In our donor service area there are three programs that will help you arrange whole body donation.

UW Willed Body Program
Department of Biological
Structure
PO Box 357420
Seattle, WA 98195
(206) 543-1860

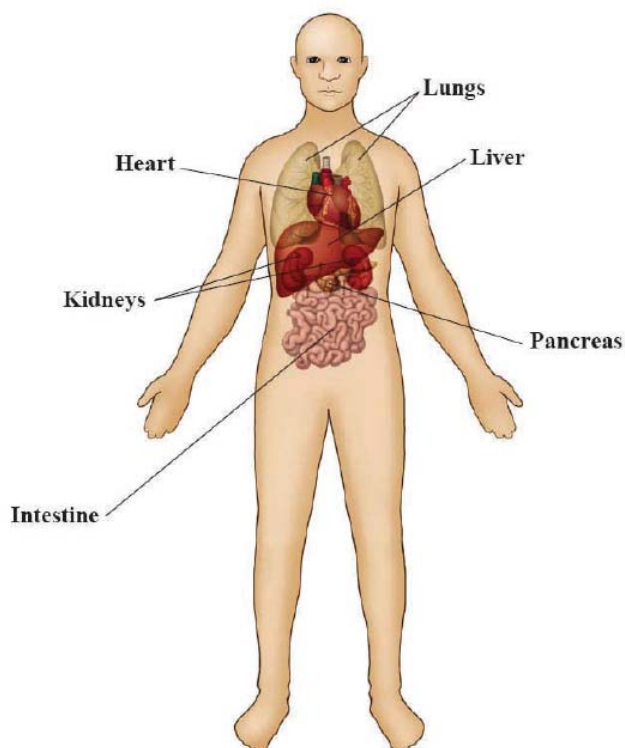
Montana State University –
Bozeman
WWAMI Body Donation Program
308 Leon Johnson Hall
PO Box 173080
Bozeman, MT 59717
(406) 994-6516

Science Care
Anatomical, Inc.
20100 E. 32nd Pkwy Ste.
125
Aurora, CO 80011-8175
(866) 887-0900
www.sciencecare.com

Idaho State University
Anatomical Donations Program
P.O. Box 643510
Pullman, WA 99164-3210
(509) 335-2602

University of Idaho
WWAMI Body Donation
Department of Biological Sciences
650 Memorial Drive
Pocatello, ID 83298-8007
(208)282-4379

Information about Donated Organs for Transplant



Heart

- Some conditions that can make a transplant necessary are cardiomyopathy, heart failure, myocarditis, and heart disease.
- Hearts can be preserved for 4-6 hours before transplant

Intestine

- Most intestinal transplants are preformed on infants and children.
- Some conditions that could make a transplant necessary are twisted or blocked intestines or short-gut syndrome.
- The Northwest developed its first intestine transplant program in 2004.
- Intestines can be preserved for 8-16 hours.

Kidney

- While waiting for a kidney transplant, many patients undergo dialysis, to clean toxins out of blood.

- Some conditions that could make a kidney transplant necessary are high blood pressure, diabetes and cystic kidney disease.
- The most commonly transplanted organ & most in need.
- Kidneys can be preserved up to 36 hours.

Liver

- A donated liver can sometimes be split between two recipients, so one donor can be the source of two liver transplants.
- Some conditions that could necessitate a liver transplant are birth defects of the liver or bile duct, chronic liver infections like Hepatitis or drug and alcohol damage.
- Livers have a preservation time of 4-16 hours; they are blood typed and matched for size and weight of donor.

Lung

- A single lung can save a life. One donor can be the source of two lung transplants.
- Some conditions that could necessitate a lung transplant are cystic fibrosis, pulmonary hypertension, emphysema, and pulmonary edema.
- Lungs have a preservation time of 4-6 hours; they are blood typed and matched for size and weight of donor.

Pancreas

- The pancreas controls the level of glucose in the blood. It is often transplanted with a kidney, because diabetes affects both organs.
- Conditions that might necessitate a pancreas transplant are diabetes or pancreas failure.
- The pancreas can be preserved for 2-14 hours before transplant.

Heart Valves

- Heart valves can be recovered when the whole heart is determined not to be viable for transplant.
- Donated human vessels and valves are used as replacements and can mean the difference between life and death to recipients.

Skin

- Skin can be used to aid in the healing process for severe burn victims, for those who suffer from a disfiguring injury, or disease.
- Donated skin grafts will protect recipients from infection while promoting regeneration of their own skin.
- Skin is removed from the back of the legs and the back, about the thickness of a sunburn peel.
- Donation of skin does not interfere with funeral viewing arrangements.

Upper Body Bone

- The humerus, radius and ulna are the bones in the arm that can be removed.
- Bones can be transplanted in order to prevent amputation, promote healing maintain mobility, and structure.
- After the bone and soft tissues are recovered, procurement technicians replace the bone with prosthetics.

Bone & Connective Tissue

- The gift of bone and connective tissues helps individuals with various orthopedic and neurosurgical conditions.
- These tissues will be used in a variety of back, joint, and leg surgeries such as hip replacement, knee reconstruction, and spinal fusion.
- In all, over one hundred people may benefit from the gift of bone and connective tissue donation from one person
- After the bone and soft tissues are recovered, procurement technicians replace the bone with prosthetics.

Veins

- Many people lose circulation in their legs, or even in their heart, due to disease or trauma.
- Donated veins are used to restore circulation in heart bypass surgeries and to avoid leg amputation for people suffering poor circulation.

Eye

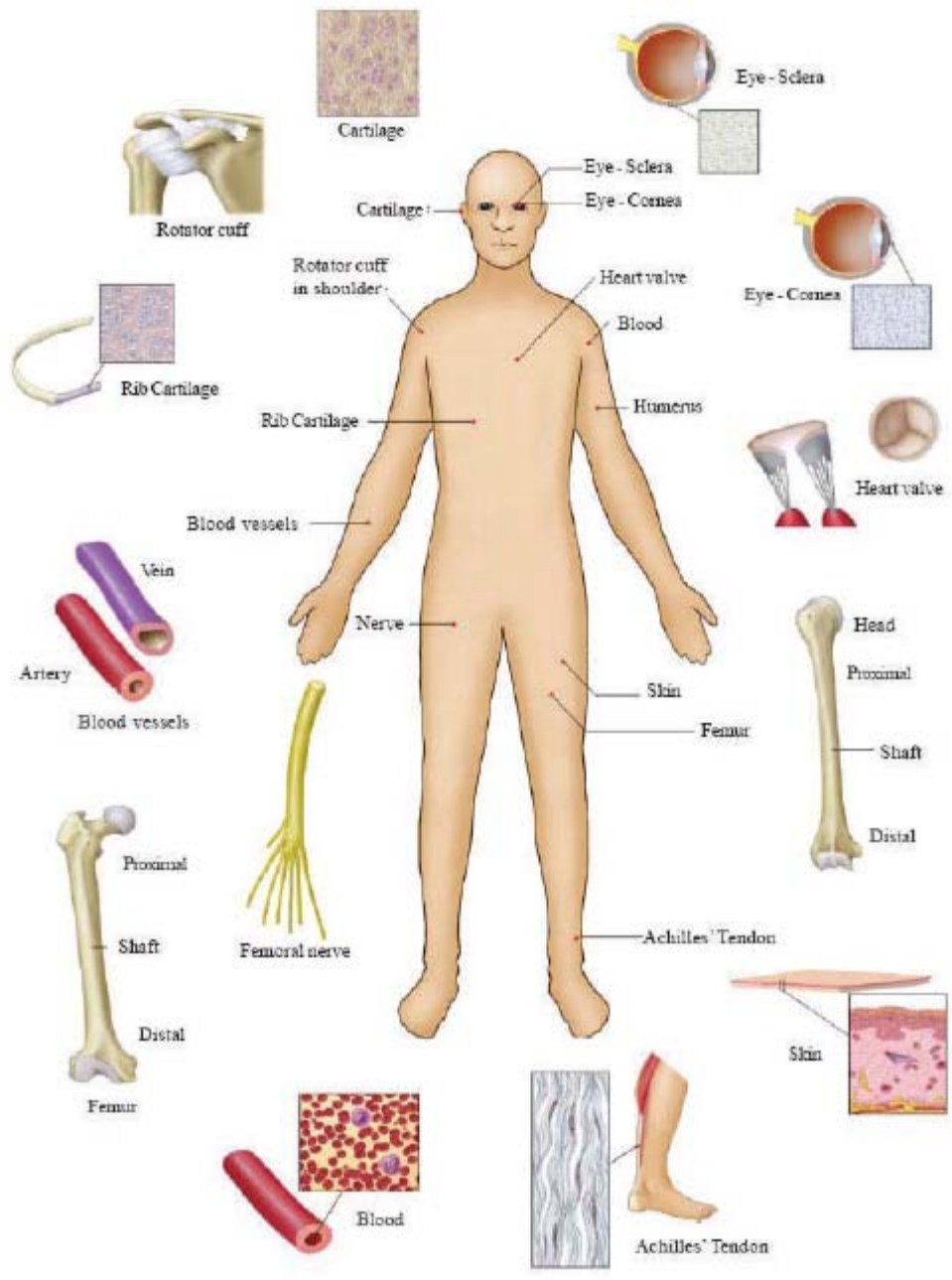
- Cornea
 - The Cornea is the clear window to the eye. It is about the size of a contact lens.
 - Traumatic accidents to the eye, infections, and inherited eye diseases like Keratoconus are just a few reasons why cornea donation can fill such a great need.
 - Almost anyone can donate their corneas. Even individuals with diabetes or cancer.
- Whole Globe
 - After the cornea has been recovered, the sclera (the white part of the eye) can be utilized to repair eyelids and reinforce the wall of the eye.
 - Sclera can be used to repair ruptured ear drums to restore hearing.

Research

- Organs are not recovered for the sole purpose of research.
- Once removed, if the organs are found to be unsuitable for transplant or a recipient cannot be found, they may be provided for research.
- The entire body is not donated for research.

Information About Donated Tissues for Transplantation

Donor Tissue	Transplanted Tissue	Applications	Benefits to Recipients
Eye	Sclera	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repair eyelid, reinforce wall of eye. Also used to repair ruptured ear drums. 	Maintain structure. Restores hearing.
	Cornea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace diseased or damaged cornea. 	Prevents blindness. Restores vision.
Musculo-skeletal	Bone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limb sparing procedures for cancer and traumatic injuries, large bone grafts, joint replacement, hip revision, spinal fusion, dental procedures, and a multitude of other orthopedic procedures. 	Avoid amputation, promote healing, relieve pain, and improve and maintain mobility.
	Tendons and Ligaments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ligament repair for knees, elbow, and wrists. 	Restore mobility, alleviates pain and provides independence.
	Cartilage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repairs congenital facial defects, hand surgeries. Used with bone for knee and joint surgeries resulting from traumatic injury or degenerative processes. 	Restores facial appearance and hand function.
Cardio-vascular	Heart Valves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repairs congenital heart defects, traumatic injury, disease and degenerative processes. 	Life saving procedure for children. An alternative to prosthetic valve transplants. Prevents need for life-long anticoagulant (blood thinning) medication.
	Veins and arteries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bypass surgeries Extremity vascularization for peripheral vascular disease or traumatic injury. Fistula repair for dialysis treatment. Aortic and thoracic Aneurysm repair. 	Utilized when the individual does not have viable autograft (their own) vessels to reconstruct vascular defect, prevents amputation; vascularization of extremity, fistula repair to enable dialysis treatments to resume
Other	Skin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burn care Wound care 	Skin grafts can be a lifesaving therapy - alleviating pain and helping to prevent infection and dehydration.
	Fascia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dura repair, abdominal surgeries, and bladder suspension. 	Provides protective covering for brain with cranial surgery. Provides structure and support in some types of abdominal surgery. Restores independence in daily activities.



Local Donation Resources

Organ and Tissue Donation

LifeCenter Northwest
Living Legacy Foundation
Serving WA, MT, AK, and North ID
11245 SE 6th St, Ste 100
Bellevue, WA 98004
(877) 275-5269
www.lcnw.org
www.donatelifetoday.com

Tissue and Eye Donation

SightLife
Serving WA, MT and Northern ID
901 Boren Ave, Ste 810
Seattle, WA 98104
(800) 847-5786
www.sightlife.org

Life Alaska, Inc.
Serving AK
235 E 8th Avenue, Suite 100
Anchorage, AK 99501
(800) 719-5433
www.lifealaska.org

National Donation Resources

United Network for Organ Sharing
www.unos.org

Donate Life America
www.donatelifelife.net