

THE GIFT OF LIFE

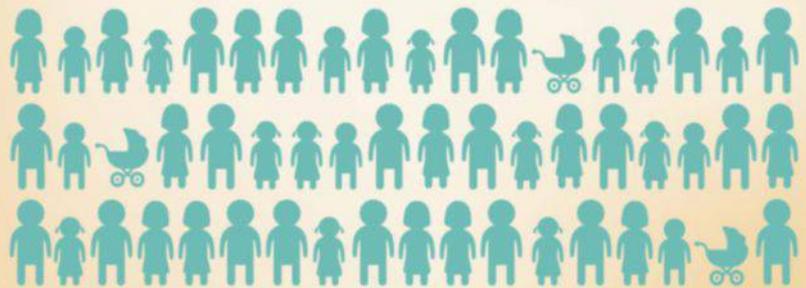


Every year, thousands of people receive an organ, eye, or tissue transplant. Ever wonder how it works?

What can be donated:

Middle Ear
 Corneas Face
 Blood Stem Cells
 Hands Heart
 Lungs Liver
 Skin Blood Vessels
 Intestines Bones
 Pancreas
 Kidneys

Up to 8 lives can be saved by one organ donor.



And more than 50 people can have their sight or health restored by donated corneas and tissues.

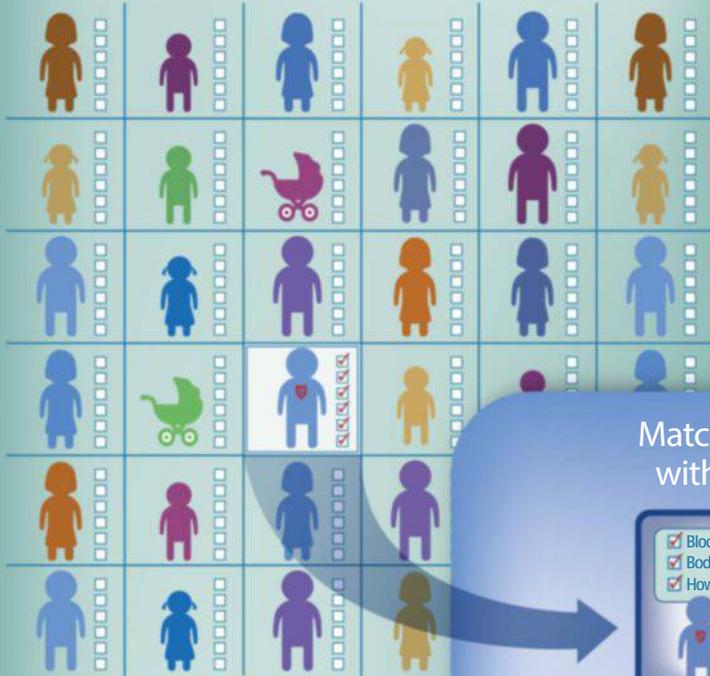


When someone needs a transplant:

The process begins when someone's organ starts to fail, and he or she will need a transplant to survive. A thorough evaluation is made at a transplant center.



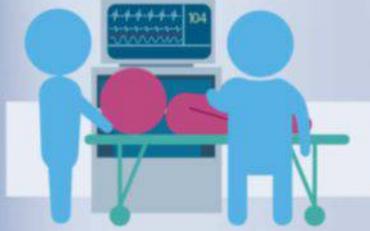
A person who passes the evaluation will be put on the national transplant waiting list, and the wait for a matching donor organ begins.



The waiting list is very long. Not everyone will receive an organ in time, and an average of 21 people on the list die each day. That's why it's so important to register.

How someone becomes a donor:

Most organs for transplants come from deceased donors. Here's how that happens. A person comes to the hospital with a life-threatening brain injury, such as from an accident, a stroke, or lack of oxygen. The person is put on artificial support.

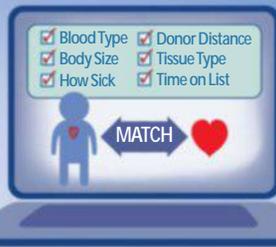


The doctors work hard to save the patient's life. But sometimes, nothing can be done. There's a complete loss of brain function. The patient is declared clinically and legally dead. Only then is donation an option.

The hospital contacts the organ procurement organization (OPO), which checks the donor registry. If the person is registered, the OPO will inform the family. If not, the family will be asked to authorize donation.



Matching a donor with a recipient:



A national system matches people on the waiting list with donors. Many factors are taken into consideration.



But some things are NEVER considered. Organs are never matched based on someone's race, gender, how much money they make or how famous they are.

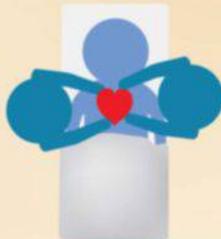


That's when donation can turn a time of loss into a time of hope. Because machines have kept blood containing oxygen flowing to the organs, they can be passed along.

Transforming a life:



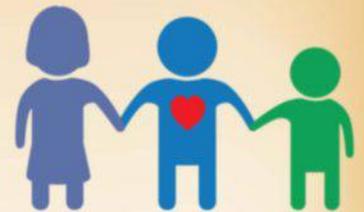
Once a match is found, the patients are contacted by their transplant team... a call that could mean a second chance at life.



The organs are recovered from the donor, and sent to the hospitals where surgeons perform the lifesaving transplants.



It will take healthy living and medications to keep the organ working well in its new home.



You can choose to pass along life too. Any age is the right age. And any day is the right day to sign up.

To learn more and sign up, go to organdonor.gov.