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## Organ donation: Gift of life

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### Abstract

Every year, August 13, is celebrated as Organ Donation Day. The day is celebrated to motivate and encourage people to donate their organs and to understand the value of organ donation in the life of an individual who needs it because lakhs of people die every year waiting for an organ and every 12 minutes, one more patient is added to the waiting list. According to a survey, every year in India, about: 500,000 people die because of non-availability of organs, 200,000 people die due to liver disease, 50,000 people die because of heart disease. Moreover, 150,000 people await a kidney transplant but only 5,000 get among them. Despite India being the world's second-most populous country, it has a pathetic deceased organ donation rate of just 0.26 per million population compared to 26 in the US, 35 in Spain and 36.5 in Croatia.

**Keywords:** Organ donation, donor, recipient

### Introduction

Organ donation is the process of allowing organ or tissue to be removed surgically from one person to place it in another person or to use it for research purpose. It is done by the consent of donor in case he is alive or by the consent of next of kin after death. Organ donation is encouraged worldwide.



Kidneys, liver, lungs, heart, bones, bone marrow, skin, pancreas, corneas, intestines and skin are commonly used for transplantation to render new life to the recipient. Organ donation is mostly done after the donor's death. However, certain organs and tissues such as a kidney, lobe of a lung, portion of the liver, intestine or pancreas can be donated by living donors as well.

### Definition of organ donation

1. Organ donation is the process of removing tissues or organs from a live, or recently dead, person called Donor to be used in another live person called Recipient.
2. It is the process of removing organ or tissue from a live, dead or recently dead person to be used for another person.

The person who donates is Donor and who receives is Recipient.

### Types of organ donation

1. Live Donations (When the person making the donation is alive)
2. Cadaver/ Deceased Donations (After the donor dies)

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### Live donations

This type of donation occurs when a living person wishes to donate organs to some immediate family member in need. Only first degree relatives (Parents, siblings & children) are allowed to be Live Donors. There is a precondition on the organs that can be donated. They can donate one Kidney (as one kidney is capable of maintaining the body functions), a portion of Pancreas and a part of the Liver.

### Cadaver/ deceased donations

This kind of donation involves taking organs from a person who has just died. But organ can be taken only if the deceased person registered his/her wish for the donation or his first degree relatives give their consent. In deceased donations, an organ to be donated depends on the type of death.

Death is of two main types: Brain Death and Cardiac/ Natural Death.

**Brain death:** is the irreversible and permanent end of all brain functions. Such persons are kept on artificial support (ventilators) to maintain oxygenation of organs so that the organs are in healthy condition until they are removed. Most cases of brain death are the end result of head injuries or brain tumor patients from Intensive care units. It is possible to donate all organs in the case of Brain death.

**Cardiac death:** When a person suffers a Cardiac death, the heart stops beating. Due to the lack of circulation of blood the vital organs quickly become unusable for transplantation. However, if the person is on a ventilator and if it is medically clear that the person cannot survive, then the family can consider Organ donation for certain vital organs. Organ Donation such donations typically take place in the operating room. Such donations typically take place in the operating room.

At present, most organs for transplants come from living donors, whereby these donors may legally only be the immediate family. As a result, only a small percentage of organ seekers are able to find compatible and keen donors. Due to the extremely low number of deceased donations, most people awaiting transplant breathe their last.

A large number of people die all over world every year due to paucity of organ. Majority of these can be saved if more and more people pledge for 3 voluntary organ donation after death.

**Tissue donation** | When someone dies after diagnosis of cardiac death, they can only donate tissues for transplantation as most tissues do not require a constant blood supply to be successfully transplanted. More people will die as a result of cardiac death than brain death

**Tissues that can be donated** | Skin, Bone, Corneas, Heart valves, Veins

- One set of corneas are given to two people needing sight
- Heart valves are used in valve replacement surgery, common in children
- Skin grafts are used for burn victims

**TRANSPLANTATION | TIME PROCESS TAKES**

Lungs	Heart	Liver	Pancreas	Kidney
6 hrs	6 hrs	12 hrs	24 hrs	48 hrs

### Medical requirements

1. People of all ages.
2. Any healthy willing person.
3. Only one exception is that HIV and ACTIVE CANCER patients cannot donate.

### Give life to others

#### Once you are no more

You must have been donating food, money, shelter etc. during your life time. Organ donation gives you the chance to enhance that spirit by recycling yourself even after death.

### Organ donation - Gift of life

- There is huge need for organs.
- Almost all organs can be donated to everyone and a single donor can save upto 50 lives.
- Instead of taking organs to the heaven lets create heaven in the earth.

### Some important facts about organ donation

1. Anyone can be a potential donor regardless of age, race, or medical history.
2. All major religions in India support organ, eye, and tissue donations and see it as the final act of love and generosity toward others. It should not be treated as interference in God's work rather it is treated as contributing in God's work.
3. If one is sick or injured and admitted to the hospital, the number one priority is to save his/her life. Organ, eye and tissue donation can only be considered after one is deceased.
4. An open casket funeral is possible for organ, eye and tissue donors. Through the entire donation process the body is treated with care, respect and dignity.
5. There is no cost to the donor or their family for organ or tissue donation.

By being an organ donor you can save the lives of 7 individuals by way of organ donation and enhance the lives of over 50 people by way of tissue donation.

More organ donation awareness should be done in the following ways:

1. Social media
2. Celebrity involvement
3. Organizing awareness camps
4. Involving the government and public hospitals.

### Conclusion

The government of India is making efforts to spread awareness about organ transplant to encourage the same. However, it needs to take effective steps to raise the number of donors. Most of the countries around the world suffer from low organ donor rate. The issue must be taken more seriously. Laws to increase the rate of organ donation must be put in place to encourage the same.

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