



Top 10 Myths About Donation

Myth: “I heard about a guy who woke up one morning after a party. He was in a bathtub full of ice, and his kidneys were stolen and sold on the black market.”

Fact: It is illegal to buy or sell organs in the United States. Matching donors & recipients is a highly complex procedure that requires trained medical professionals and thorough testing.

Myth: “Rich and famous people get moved to the top of the transplant list, while ‘regular’ people have to wait longer for a transplant.”

Fact: Things like severity of illness, time spent waiting, blood type and match potential are the factors that determine a person’s place on the waiting list. A person’s income, race, age, income or social status is never taken into account during the allocation process.

Myth: “If I’m in an accident and the hospital knows I’m an organ donor, the doctors won’t try to save my life.”

Fact: Health care providers make all efforts to save the life of a patient who enters their hospital. Organ, eye and tissue recovery happens only after all lifesaving efforts have been exhausted and death has been legally declared. Further, doctors and nurses involved in a person’s care before death are not the same as those involved in the recovery or transplantation of donation organs, tissues and corneas.

Myth: “My religion does not approve of donation.”

Fact: Most major religions support organ donation. Some leave it to personal choice; others view it as an act of charity and goodwill.

Myth: “My family will be burdened with the medical costs of my organ donation.”

Fact: Costs associated with recovering and processing organs and tissue for transplant are never passed on to the donor family. The family will be responsible for medical expenses incurred before death is declared and for expenses involving funeral arrangements.

Myth: “If I donate, the recipient or his/her family will continuously contact my family.”

Fact: Your family’s information will never be released to a recipient without their consent. Communication is carefully screened by the organ procurement organization. Both parties must agree to have contact, prior to information being released.

Myth: “I have a history of medical illness. My organs aren’t good enough to donate.”

Fact: You are not too old or unhealthy to register to be a donor. Don’t rule yourself out - designate your decision to be a donor by signing up on your state donor registry, and leave it to the medical professionals at the time of your death to determine if your organs and tissues are viable for transplant. One person can save and heal more than 100 lives through the gift of organ and tissue donation.

Myth: “I’m too young (or too old) for my organs to be used.”

Fact: You are not too old or unhealthy to register to be a donor. Don’t rule yourself out - designate your decision to be a donor by signing up on your state donor registry, and leave it to the medical professionals at the time of your death to determine if your organs and tissues are viable for transplant. *Parents will make the final decision for minors who become potential donors.* The use of organs depends on the health of the organ, not necessarily the age of the donor.

Myth: “I hear they take everything...even if I only want to donate my kidneys.”

Fact: You can decide which of your organs & tissues to make available for donation. When you fill out a registry form, you can list exceptions to what organs and/or tissues you do not wish to donate.

Myth: “Organ and tissue donation will leave my body badly mutilated and not presentable for a funeral or memorial service.”

Fact: The organ procurement organization treats each donor with the utmost respect and dignity. Donated organs are removed in a surgical manner allowing a donor’s body to be viewed in an open casket funeral.