



To donate life, discuss it today. OK?

It's important to discuss organ and tissue donation with the people close to you.

Decided or thought about becoming an organ and tissue donor?

Everyone has their own reasons for deciding whether to become an organ and tissue donor. It is important that the people close to you understand those reasons.

Your family need to know your decision because they will be asked to give consent.

Families that know each other's donation decisions are more likely to uphold them.

Families that do not know the wishes of the deceased are much less likely to agree to donation.

You may think you are too old or unhealthy to be a donor. Or that your religion doesn't support organ and tissue donation. These are common myths and misconceptions.

Discover the facts about organ and tissue donation. This will help you make an informed decision about whether to become an organ and tissue donor. You can register your decision online at the Australian Organ Donor Register (www.medicareaustralia.gov.au), call 1800 777 203 or complete a form at any Medicare branch.

You still need to discuss your decision with your family.

When is a good time to start a family discussion?

Today. A good start is to use every day situations to start a discussion on important life issues, including what to do with your organs and tissues when you die. This might include:

- The next time your family sits down together for a meal
- Making a will or advanced health directive
- Getting life insurance or income protection
- Leaving home for the first time as a young adult
- Getting or renewing your driver's licence
- Celebrating an anniversary with your partner
- Having a significant birthday: 21, 30, 40, 50 or more
- Getting a check-up at the GP
- Hearing about someone who has been a donor, needs a transplant or has had a transplant

- Watching donation and transplantation stories on TV or seeing a media article
- Seeing or hearing an ad on TV, radio or billboards
- Seeing a traumatic event in the news
- After a friend or family member dies
- When children discuss the topic at school.

If you have already had a discussion with your family about your wishes, these events provide a good opportunity to repeat your decision to ensure they are remembered.

Why does my family need to know my decision?

As part of the national reform package for organ and tissue donation, the family of every potential donor will be asked to give their consent to donation if the situation arises. The request will be made by trained health professionals.

Even if you have registered your wish to be a donor, your family will still be asked to give consent.

The most important thing people want to know in order to make a decision about a family member becoming a donor is the wishes of the deceased.

Many Australians have not informed their family of their donation decision. Many family members do not confidently know each other's donation decision. Many people have not discussed their donation decision with family members in the past 12 months. Many cannot remember.

It's not my family's business - Yes it is. Your family will be asked to give consent for you to become a donor when you die.

I'll think about it later - Most people who become donors die suddenly and unexpectedly.

I don't have time. I'm too busy - It does not take long to register your decision on the Australian Organ Donor Register and to have a discussion with your family.

My family won't understand - Organ and tissue donation is a sensitive subject. The decision to become a donor is a personal and important one. To make the right decision for yourself, you need to have the facts so that your decision is informed. Your family might also need time to discover the facts and make their own decisions.





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Resources - Discussion Kit

You can download your Discussion Kit on organ and tissue donation at www.donatelife.gov.au

This resource aims to assist your family to have an informed, memorable discussion about each other's donation decisions.

Did you know...?

- Australia has a world class reputation for successful transplant outcomes.
- Australia also has one of the lowest donation rates in the developed world.
- In 2009, 247 organ donors gave 799 Australians a new chance in life.
- Around 1700 people are on Australian organ transplant waiting lists at any one time. As of 11 May 2010, 1718 Australians were on the waiting lists.
- On average, people on the transplant list must wait between 6 months and 4 years.
- In 2009, the Australian population had 11.3 deceased donors per million people. Spain had 34.3 and the US 26.3 donors per million people.
- In Australia, just 58% of families of potential donors give consent for organ donation to proceed.
- Around 40% of families in Australia do not give consent. In many cases it is because they do not feel they can confidently make a decision about the wishes of the deceased.
- If you want to donate life, it is important to discuss it today.

Australian organ transplant waiting list at 11 May 2010

Kidney	1278
Liver	179
Heart	89
Lung	140
Pancreas	28
Intestine	4
Total	1718

Source: Australia and New Zealand Organ Registry (ANZOD).

2009 - Transplanted organs in Australia

Kidney	446
Liver	185
Heart	59
Heart/lung	2
Lung	112
Pancreas/kidney	37
Pancreas islets	9
Total	850

Source: Australia and New Zealand Organ Registry (ANZOD) in conjunction with ANZDATA Registry

DISCOVER the facts about organ and tissue donation
 Make an informed choice and **DECIDE** about becoming a donor
DISCUSS your decision with the people close to you.
 Find out more at www.donatelife.gov.au

Authorised by the Australian Government, Capital Hill, Canberra.

