

Did you know?

- You are more likely to need a transplant than become a donor.
- A donor can donate a heart, lungs, two kidneys, pancreas, liver and small bowel and can restore the sight of two people by donating their corneas.
- Donors can also give bone and tissue such as skin, heart valves and tendons. Skin grafts have helped people with severe burns and bone is used in orthopaedic surgery.
- The majority of relatives agree to organ donation and with the introduction of the Human Tissue Acts on 1 September 2006, which make the wishes of the donor paramount, it is hoped that more families will be encouraged to respect their loved one's wishes. It is important that you discuss organ and tissue donation with the people closest to you so that, if the time ever comes, they will find it easier to confirm your wishes to NHS professionals.
- You can make a permanent record of your wishes by joining the NHS Organ Donor Register.
- Most organ donations come from people who have died while on a ventilator in a hospital intensive care unit. Organs, particularly hearts and lungs, deteriorate very quickly without an oxygen supply and the ventilator is able to keep blood and oxygen circulating after death.
- Traditionally organ donors have come from two groups: road accident and brain haemorrhage patients. Improved road safety and medical intervention mean that fewer people in both groups are dying.
- The age of people who have donated organs after their death has changed in the past decade with more aged over 50 and fewer younger donors. Older donors are less likely to be able to donate as many of their organs as younger people, as some organs may become less suitable for transplantation as people age. But organs from people in their 70s and 80s can be transplanted successfully.
- The number of people needing a transplant is expected to rise steeply over the next decade due to an ageing population, an increase in kidney failure and scientific advances resulting in more people being suitable for a transplant.
- Black people are three times as likely as the general population to develop kidney failure.
- The need for organs in the Asian community is three to four times higher than that of the white community. This is because conditions such as diabetes and heart disease - that can result in organ failure - occur more often in the Asian population.
- The number of living donor kidney transplants has more than quadrupled in the last 10 years and now account for one in nearly three of all kidney transplants.
- The oldest solid organ donor ever recorded in the UK was 84.

- The oldest recorded cornea donor was 104.
- The oldest recorded recipient of an organ in the UK was an 85-year-old kidney patient.
- The oldest recipient of a cornea transplant in the UK was 104.
- Surgical techniques, such as splitting livers, have meant that a donor can help more patients than ever before.
- Repeated surveys show that the majority of the public support organ donation. The last survey conducted in 2003 for UK Transplant showed that 90% of people support organ donation.
- All the major religions support organ donation and many actively promote it. [Link to Factsheet 3 Religious perspectives](#)
- 30% of people on the NHS Organ Donor Register are aged between 16 and 25 when they join. A further 24% are aged between 26 and 35. 9% are 65 or over when they join.
- More women (54%) than men (46%) have signed up on the NHS Organ Donor Register.

You can find out more about organ donation and join the NHS Organ Donor Register by calling 0300 123 23 23 or visiting the NHSBT website www.organdonation.nhs.uk

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