



Regardless of religious affiliations, congregations and houses of worship across the nation recognize the life-saving benefits of organ and tissue donation.

We need your help saving lives.

Organ, eye and tissue donation is an important, personal decision. Yet many people avoid thinking about it; don't take the necessary steps to document their wishes; or believe they are too old or not healthy enough to donate.

Right now, almost 113,000 men, women and children are on the national transplant waiting list; nearly 9,000 of these individuals are from New York State with almost 600 from our region alone. Every 10 minutes another person is added onto the transplant waiting list. 20 people die each day because they cannot receive the lifesaving organ they need.

Multicultural communities represent 25% of the population, yet comprise more than 60% of those on the transplant waiting list because of higher rates of diabetes, hypertension and kidney disease. For a transplant, compatible blood type is critical. Some blood types are more common in people of color. These are reasons why we need more donors from multicultural communities.

Many individuals have not thought about making a decision about organ, eye and tissue donation. Here are the facts about organ donation.

To register to donate, anyone age 16 or older can enroll in the NYS Donate Life Registry.

There is no upper age limit to registering as an organ donor. This year a 95 year old World War II veteran and coal miner donated his liver to a woman in her 60's.

Don't assume you aren't healthy enough to donate. Health conditions such as diabetes and hypertension don't prohibit someone from registering as a donor. Tissues and corneas as well as organs are needed.

Your medical care will not be compromised if a doctor knows you are interested in donation. Medical professionals and ambulance personnel are trained to save your life first and foremost. Only authorized organ and tissue recovery specialists (not doctors or nurses in the hospital) have access to the confidential donor registries. A person's registration status is only checked at the time of death by these individuals,

Celebrity status or income play no role in transplant priority.

Final burial wishes can be honored after donation.

There is no cost to donation.

By registering as an organ, eye and tissue donor you could bring hope and renewed life to others in need. One donor can help save the lives of up to 8 people, provide sight to two people through cornea donation and improve the lives of nearly 75 more people through tissue donation.

Organ, eye and tissue donation is an end-of-life option that everyone should decide upon. Making your decision now about donation means your family won't be burdened with having to make it for you later. It only takes a few minutes to enroll online in the New York Donate Life Registry accessible by going to www.PassLifeOn.org. You may also register by checking the "New York State Organ and Tissue Donation" box when applying for or renewing a Learner's Permit, Driver's License or Non-Driver's ID or on the Voter Registration Form, or when applying or renewing health insurance benefits through the New York State – Health Insurance Exchange. For more information visit the Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network at www.donorrecovery.org