

## The Truth about Organ, Eye, and Tissue Donation

Many people have questions, and have heard myths that may keep them from saying “yes” to donation. The following information addresses some of those common misunderstandings.

*Many people worry that their healthcare providers who are working to save their lives in the case of an accident, injury or illness won't work as hard if they know that they want to be a donor.*

Remember that those healthcare providers are dedicated to preserving life. The medical team that is working to save a patient's life is an entirely different team from the donation recovery team. Only after all efforts to save a patient's life have been exhausted, and death has been declared, will the recovery effort begin.

*Does donation remove the possibility of having an open casket funeral service?*

Donation does not cause disfigurement to a patient's body. Recovery is done with great respect through delicate surgical procedures that can be covered by clothing. Recovery teams work with families and local funeral service providers to make sure that there are no unnecessary delays and that the family's wishes will be upheld.

*I've heard that there is discrimination and that wealthy or celebrity people will receive donated organs, eyes or tissues before other people.*

The length of time that it takes to receive an organ transplant is governed by many factors. They include blood type, tissue type, size of the organ, length of time on the waiting list, severity of illness and other medical criteria. Factors such as race, gender, age, and income or celebrity status are NOT considered when determining recipients for donated organs.

*I am too old or too unhealthy to donate.*

Anyone can sign up to be a donor, even people with pre-existing medical conditions. Actual donation and transplantation will be based on the patient's current medical condition and social histories at the time of their passing. The appropriate medical professionals will assess the situation and determine the suitability of any potential organs, eyes, or tissues.

*Is donation expensive?*

Since donation is a gift, there is no cost to the donor's family or estate. It is important to know that all of the widely known and practiced religions support donation and consider it the ultimate act of charity.

To make your intent known as a donor, go to [donatelifewisconsin.org](http://donatelifewisconsin.org) and click on the orange donor dot. This allows you to send an email to the DMV to have your decision entered into your driver's record. ***But most importantly, make sure that you discuss your decision with your family and friends so that they can carry out your wishes at the appropriate time.***

*Information courtesy of UW Organ Procurement Organization*