

## **A Question That Saves Lives – Organ Donation? “Yes” or “No”?**

Let's talk about levels of donation.

When it comes to a simple donation of your gently used clothes, shoes or your sweet pictures hanging so perfectly in your hallway. It can make you stop and think but in the short term its rather easy to let these things go. Afterall most of them will be replaced with new ones with fresher colors and UpToDate vibes.

Then we have the donation of money, next level. We tend to hold on a little tighter in this case. We rationalize what is a good amount to give. We want to know exactly who is getting the money and who will benefit from it. We even determine how much we will donate based on some of the answers to these questions. Diminishing the amount if we are uncertain of the answers even if we are prepared to donate more.

We feel more connected to monetary donations even to the point of wanting to see the results from your charitable jester. We remember exactly how much and why we donated and may encourage other to do the same.

Ok now here is the big one. Level 3, ORGAN DONATION! Now we are talking about the ultimate

commitment. Less if we are talking Organ Donation once we have perished, but a great contribution to society any way you slice it. The greatest donation however in my opinion is the **Living Donor**. The living donor donates knowing they will live the remainder of their lives without what they gave.

Having the courage to willingly walk into the hospital a healthy individual knowing or at least believing you will walk out with less internally than you came in with. You will have the uncertainty of after surgery pain and discomfort. You will anticipate how recovery will be and how and when you will be back to your, before donation routine.

Becoming a living donor is a decision that only the donor themselves can make. They can ask the professionals all the questions, speak with their spouse, friends and even their children to get their opinions and ideas about becoming a living donor. You will consider how it will affect your family and those close to you. Knowing that there is a chance no matter how slim there is a chance that you may end up giving your life while trying to donate an organ.

Living Organ donation some say is heroic. I say it's the ultimate gift to humanity. The highest form of service to others. A most courageous and selfless act. I say it is given by those with the highest value of "LIFE"

Let's take a look, at the organ recipient waiting list. It is broken into two parts according to the OPTN (Organ Procurement & Transplantation Network) whose job is to link all professionals involved in the U.S. donation and transplantation system. Critical to this system are also individuals who sign organ donor cards, people who comment on policy proposals and a very large number of volunteers who support donation and transplantation.

One of their main priorities of OPTN is to improve the U.S. system so that more life-saving organs are available for transplant. Patient safety is also at the forefront of activities at transplant hospitals, organ procurement organizations and labs.

As of March 6, 2025

\*In the United States 104,449 Candidates are waiting for a transplant (this list is for various organs) 90,298 are waiting for a kidney which is currently the highest organ need.

2024 – There were 48,137 Transplants that took place in the U.S., 41,115 are Deceased Donors and 7,022 Living Donors

2023 - There were 46,629 Transplants that took place in the U.S., 39,679 are Deceased Donors and 6,950 Living Donors

2022 – There were 42,889 Transplants that took place in the U.S., 36,421 are Deceased Donors and 6,468 Living Donors

As of March 6, 2025, there has been 4,046 Transplants in the U.S. 3,475 are Deceased Donors and 571 Living Donors. Donorship is certainly continuing to climb.

Here's one more interesting fact about Organ Donation. According to the Gift of Life Donor Program the national average wait time for a transplant depends on the organ needed. Below are the average wait times based on the organ.

- Kidney – 5 years
- Liver – 11 months
- Heart - 4 months
- Kidney/Pancreas – 1.5 years
- Pancreas – 2 years

HRSA (Health Resources & Services Administration) [organdonor.gov](https://organdonor.gov) reported these interesting facts about organ donation.

- Approximately **17 people die each day waiting for an organ transplant**
- Every donor can **save 8 lives** and **enhance over 75 more**

- Every **8 minutes another person is added to the transplant waiting list**
- In 2025 the kidney remains the most needed organ followed by the liver.
- The success rate of a living donor transplant is 98%
- 2023 was the first year Liver transplants exceeded 10,000, an 11.9% increase over 2022
- 2024 was the first year Lung transplants exceeded 3,000
- 2023 set all time volume records for Kidney and Heart transplants
- The average age of Deceased Donors is 50-64

Want more information about becoming an Organ Donor Living or Deceased, visit any of the sites below to learn more.

<https://donatelife.net>

<https://www.organdonor.gov/sign-up>

**READY TO BECOME AN ORGAN DONOR - Say YES to Saving a Life or Two!**

**SIGN UP HERE TO GIVE THE GIFT OF “LIFE”:**

<https://www.organdonor.gov/>

*BeLinda Pressley*

