



## Talking Points, FAQs and Statistics

### What is National Minority Donor Awareness Month (NMDAM)?

National Minority Donor Awareness Month is a collaborative initiative of National Organ, Eye and Tissue Donation Multicultural Action Group\* to save and improve the quality of life of diverse communities by creating a positive culture for organ, eye and tissue donation. National Minority Donor Awareness Month stems from National Minority Donor Awareness Week, founded in 1996 by MOTTEP to bring heightened awareness to donation and transplantation in multicultural communities.

NMDAM is focused on outreach and education, including virtual events and messaging to:

- Provide education about organ, eye and tissue donation and transplantation
- Encourage donor registration & family conversations about donation
- Promote healthy living and disease prevention to decrease the need for transplantation.

The National Multicultural Action Group includes the [Association for Multicultural Affairs in Transplantation \(AMAT\)](#), [Association of Organ Procurement Organizations \(AOPO\)](#), [Donate Life America \(DLA\)](#), [Health Resources & Services Administration \(HRSA\)](#), [National Minority Organ Tissue Transplant Education Program \(MOTTEP\)](#) and [National Kidney Foundation \(NKF\)](#).

Multicultural Communities in Donation and Transplantation
<p><b>60%</b> of people currently on the <i>U.S. transplant waiting list</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More than 32,000 of those waiting are African American/Black</li> <li>• Nearly 23,000 of those waiting are Hispanic/Latino</li> <li>• Nearly 10,000 of those waiting are Asian/Pacific Islander</li> <li>• Nearly 1,000 of those waiting are American Indian/Alaska Native</li> </ul>
<p><b>46%</b> of people who received organ transplants in 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8,326 African American/Black organ transplant recipients</li> <li>• 6,707 Hispanic/Latino organ transplant recipients</li> <li>• 2,356 Asian/Pacific Islander organ transplant recipients</li> <li>• 271 American Indian/Alaska Native organ transplant recipients</li> </ul>
<p><b>32%</b> of deceased and living organ donors in 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1,798 deceased and 617 living African American/Black donors</li> <li>• 1,770 deceased and 1,046 living Hispanic/Latino donors</li> <li>• 345 deceased and 329 living Asian/Pacific Islander donors</li> <li>• 57 deceased and 23 living American Indian/Alaska Native donors</li> </ul>

*Data from Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (OPTN) as of May 12, 2020.*

### What can I do to increase organ, eye and tissue donation in my community?

- Register your decision to be a donor in the National Donate Life Registry, [RegisterMe.org](http://RegisterMe.org). Tell your family and friends about your decision to Donate Life.
- Ask others to visit [DonateLife.net](http://DonateLife.net) to learn more and to register as a donor.
- Participate in National Minority Donor Awareness Month in August. Visit [DonateLife.net/NMDAM](http://DonateLife.net/NMDAM) for downloadable tools, resources and implementation ideas.

## ***Frequently Asked Questions***

### **Who can be a donor?**

People of all ages and medical histories should consider themselves potential deceased donors. Your medical condition at the time of death will determine what organs and tissue can be donated.

Living donors should be in good overall physical and mental health and older than 18 years of age. Some medical conditions could prevent an individual from being a living donor. Transplant programs complete a full patient evaluation to protect both living donor and recipient health and safety.

### **Does registering as a donor change my patient care?**

Doctors work hard to save every patient's life, but sometimes there is a complete and irreversible loss of brain function. The patient is declared clinically and legally dead. Only then is donation an option.

### **Does my religion support organ, eye and tissue donation?**

All major religions support donation as a final act of compassion and generosity.

### **Is there a cost to be an organ, eye and tissue donor?**

There is no cost to the donor's family or estate for donation. The donor family pays only for medical expenses before death and costs associated with funeral arrangements.

### **Does my social and/or financial status play any part in whether or not I will receive an organ if I ever need one?**

A national system matches available organs from the donor with people on the waiting list based on many factors, including: blood type, body size, how sick they are, distance from donor hospital and time on the list. Race, income, gender, celebrity and social status are never considered.

### **Why should I register my decision to be a donor?**

The vast majority of Americans support donation as an opportunity to give life and health to others. Unfortunately, many people overlook the important step of registering as a donor. Donors are often people who die suddenly and unexpectedly. Their families are then faced with making the decision at a time of shock and grief. Registering relieves your family of this burden.

### **Why is it important for people of every community to donate?**

According to the [United Network for Organ Sharing](#) (UNOS), transplants can be successful regardless of the race or ethnicity of the donor and recipient. The chance of longer-term survival may be greater if the donor and recipient are closely matched in terms of their shared genetic background.

People of African American/Black, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latinx, American Indian/Alaska Native and multiracial descent currently make up 60% of individuals on the national organ transplant waiting list. According to the [National Kidney Foundation](#) (NKF), African Americans/Blacks suffer from kidney failure at a significantly higher rate than Whites — four times higher. African Americans/Blacks represent 13.2% of the overall U.S. population and more than 35% of all patients in the U.S. receiving dialysis for kidney failure. These communities are in great need of more organ and tissue donors.

## ***Donation and Transplantation Statistics***

- In 2019, nearly **40,000** transplants brought renewed life to patients and their families and communities (*from nearly 11,900 deceased and nearly 7,400 living donors*).
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- More than **113,000** men, women and children await lifesaving organ transplants.
  - Nearly **60%** of patients awaiting lifesaving transplants are minorities.
  - Another person is added to the nation's organ transplant waiting list **every 10 minutes**.
  - **8,000** people die each year because the organs they need are not donated in time.
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- More than **80%** of patients on the waiting list are waiting for a kidney. The average waiting time for a kidney from a deceased donor is **3 to 5 years**. A kidney from a living donor offers patients an alternative to years of dialysis and time on the national transplant waiting list (the living donor's remaining kidney will enlarge, doing the work of two healthy kidneys).
  - **12%** of patients waiting are in need of a liver. **Living donation of part of the liver** can help these patients (the remaining portion of the donor liver will regenerate and regain full function).
  - More than **one-third** of all deceased donors are age **50 or older**; **7%** are **65 or older**.
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- Each year, there are approximately **30,000** tissue donors and more than **1.75 million** tissue transplants; the surgical need for donated tissue is steadily rising.
  - A single tissue donor can help more than **75** people.
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- More than **85,000** corneas are provided for sight-restoring corneal transplants each year.
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- More than **156 million** people, approximately **60%** of the U.S. adult population, are registered organ, eye and tissue donors.\*
- To register your decision to save and heal lives, visit [RegisterMe.org](https://www.registerme.org). To learn more about organ, eye, tissue and living donation, visit [DonateLife.net](https://www.donatelife.net).

\* Living donation is not included in a donor registration.

*Data from the Donate Life America Registry Overview Report and the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (OPTN) as of January 15, 2020.*