

How organ and tissue donation works

A patient in need

When someone's organ fails, they may need a transplant to survive.

After passing a thorough examination, the patient will be put on a national transplant waiting list and the wait for a matching donor organ begins.

The waiting list is very long. It's common to wait for several years for a life-saving organ.

Unfortunately, not everyone will receive an organ because of critical variables such as the severity of a patient's illness, timing and the shortage of donors.



A potential donor

Most organs for transplants come from deceased donors. Here's how that happens:

A critically ill or injured person is admitted to a hospital, and doctors make every attempt to save them; it is their first priority. Donation only becomes an option when those attempts fail and death is imminent or has occurred. A specially trained hospital physician will declare the patient's death and Gift of Life Michigan will be contacted.

Gift of Life checks the Donor Registry. If the patient is registered, Gift of Life coordinators will inform the family. If not, they will discuss the possibility of donation with the family and seek authorization.



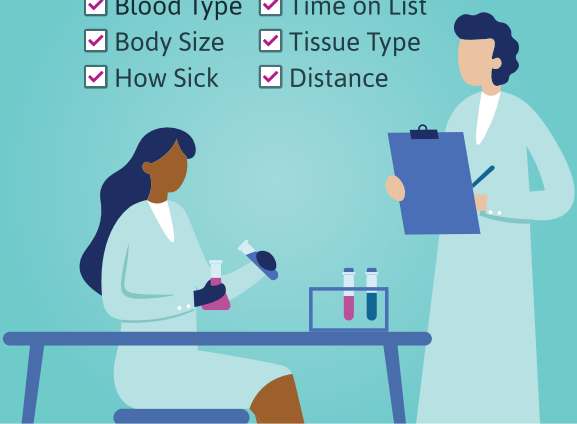
- Blood Type
- Time on List
- Body Size
- Tissue Type
- How Sick
- Distance

The best match

Gift of Life performs the necessary lab tests and submits the results to the United Network for Organ Sharing. UNOS is the national non-profit organization contracted by the federal government to match patients on the waiting list with organ donors.

Potential matches are thoroughly evaluated and many factors are considered, including: blood type, body size, how sick the patient is, how long they have been on the waiting list and timing to give transplants the highest possible chance of success.

Organs are **NEVER** matched with recipients based on race, gender, economic status or fame.



The life-saving transplant

Once a match is found, the recipient is contacted by the transplant team. Organs are recovered with the utmost care and respect and sent to transplant hospitals, where surgeons perform the life-saving procedures.

For recipients, donation can save and improve lives.

For families, donation can turn a season of loss into a legacy of generosity and hope.



golm.org

You can choose to pass along this gift of life, too. Any age is the right age and any day is the right day to decide.

Sign up on the Michigan Organ Donor Registry by visiting golm.org/register, a [Secretary of State branch office](#), or through the online services section at Michigan.gov/OrganDonation.

Organ and tissue donation FAQs

Q: Will doctors work as hard to save my life if they know I'm an organ donor?

A: Absolutely. This is perhaps the most common myth about organ donation. When a patient arrives at a hospital, the first priority is to save their life. Doctors and other medical personnel have both a moral and legal obligation to give their patients the best care possible.

By law, the hospital team working to save the patient and the transplant teams are separate.

Only when death is imminent or has been declared by a specially trained hospital physician will Gift of Life Michigan be contacted.

Q: I have health problems. Can I still be a donor?

A: Yes, people with medical conditions are still potential organ donors, so please don't rule yourself out!

For example, a diabetic might have unhealthy kidneys but a strong heart or lungs. An individual with cancer may still be able to donate some organs and tissue, depending on the type of cancer and treatments. An HIV positive donor is able to save patients living with HIV who need a transplant.

Q: Does my religion support donation?

A: All major religions approve of organ, tissue and eye donation and consider it the ultimate act of human kindness and generosity.

Q: Will I still be able to have an open casket at the funeral?

A: Yes, donors are afforded the utmost respect and care. Organ and tissue donation need not interfere with open casket viewings or the timing of services.

Q: How do I sign up?

A: You can sign up to be an organ and tissue donor by visiting golm.org/register or a Secretary of State branch office or through the online services section at Michigan.gov/OrganDonation.



Scan this code and register today!

WHAT CAN BE DONATED

ORGANS

heart
liver
lungs
kidneys
intestines
pancreas

TISSUES

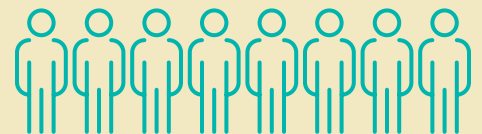
corneas
bone
tendons
skin
heart valves
veins
nerves

WHAT ONE DONOR CAN DO

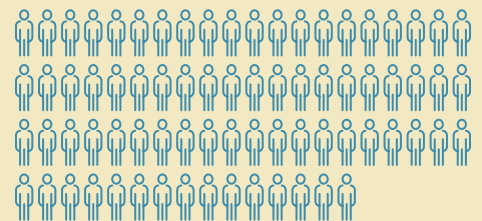


one donor

8 life-saving organs



tissues & corneas that can heal up to **75 lives** with the potential of 125



We honor life through donation.SM
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