

Donation Facts

Question: Will doctors work as hard to save the lives of registered organ donors?

Fact: If you are sick or injured, the top priority of your hospital care team is to save your life. Organ donation is only considered when all efforts to save a patient have been exhausted.

Question: Am I able to be a donor, even though I have chronic illness?

Fact: Don't rule yourself out. A patient with diabetes might not qualify to donate kidneys but could have healthy lungs or a strong heart. Donors with HIV can donate to waiting recipients with HIV. Medical teams decide which organs and tissues are suitable for transplant on a case-by-case basis.

Question: Is there an age limit to donate?

Fact: There is no age limit for organ donation. Many donors older than 60 – and some in their 80s or 90s – have saved lives. Recently, Gift of Life Michigan helped a 101-year-old woman become a tissue donor. Your medical condition at the time of death will determine whether your organs and tissues are healthy enough to help another person.

Question: Does my religion prohibit organ and tissue donation?

Fact: Most major religions in the USA either support organ and tissue donation as a final act of charity and love, or leave the decision up to the individual. If in doubt, ask your spiritual or religious leader.

Question: Will donation interfere with my funeral arrangements? Can I have an open casket?

Fact: Donation need not interfere with funeral plans, including an open casket. The donor's body is treated with the utmost respect. Gift of Life has relationships with funeral homes across Michigan.

Question: I've had COVID-19, can I still donate? Does it matter whether I've been vaccinated or not?

Fact: Patients who have been exposed to or contracted COVID-19 can still donate organs and tissue. Even lungs that were infected might still be suitable for transplant if the donor was asymptomatic at the time of donation. Being vaccinated (or not) for COVID-19 does not affect end-of-life donation eligibility.

Question: Do I have to sign up right now when I'm getting/renewing my license?

Fact: You can sign up at any time through a Secretary of State branch office, its website at Michigan.gov/OrganDonation or the Gift of Life website, golm.org/register. It only takes a few minutes to save a life, so Check Your Heart and add your name to the Michigan Organ Donor Registry today.