

MISSION STATEMENT

Donate Life Connecticut is dedicated to the purpose of public education and awareness for all Connecticut residents concerning the lifesaving benefits of organ and tissue donation.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Donate Life Connecticut continues to build relationships with other agencies and organizations in the community to share resources, collaborate, and improve donation awareness through events and projects that include:

- African American Donation Awareness Campaign
- Annual Poster Contest
- College Outreach
- Department of Motor Vehicle and AAA Alliance
- Donor Designation Stations at Health Fairs
- Donor Family & Transplant Recipient Speakers Program
- Flags Across Connecticut
- High School Educational Presentations
- National Donate Life Month
- National Donor Sabbath
- Thanks for Asking
- Thanks for Caring
- Toast to Life
- Workplace Partnership for Life

To find out more information about projects, membership, volunteerism, the donor registry, or to make a donation, please visit the Donate Life Connecticut website.



Connecticut

DONATE LIFE CONNECTICUT

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You have the power
to Donate Life.



Cameron, heart
valve recipient



Karri, bone recipient

Be
a tissue
donor.



Connecticut

You have the power to change someone's world by being a tissue donor.
It's about living. It's about Life.

Tissue Donation and Transplantation

Tissue transplantation is one of the most remarkable success stories in the history of medicine. More than one million lifesaving and life-enhancing tissue transplants are performed each year, offering patients a new chance at healthy, productive and normal lives. You are likely to have a neighbor, friend or even a family member who has received a tissue transplant. This is often a necessary part of medical treatment for a multitude of diseases and injuries, from bone fracture or ligament repair to heart surgery.

Although there is a critical shortage of some tissue for transplant, many Americans have never thought about being a tissue donor. Like organ donation, it's an opportunity to share your life with others.



Bonnie, bone recipient

When Bonnie fell on an icy playground at the school where she was a Teacher-Librarian, her life as a wife, mother, educator and volunteer came to an abrupt stop! With that one slip on the ice, her femur smashed and her leg was broken in multiple places. She was in a wheelchair for months; but following a bone transplant and months of physical therapy, her dream to walk again came true. She regained her mobility and once again is enjoying an active life.

One tissue donor can enhance the lives of more than 50 people.

Bone is used to restore mobility in people who would otherwise be incapacitated or disabled, to rebuild a jaw affected by cancer or severe gum disease and to reconstruct limbs damaged by trauma or disease.

Corneas are used to restore sight to people who have been injured by disease, infection or trauma.

Heart valves can be lifesaving to children born with absent or damaged heart valves and to adults with life-threatening cardiac defects and damage.

Ligaments and tendons are used to rebuild joints and restore strength, mobility and independence for patients injured in sporting activities, by trauma, or from arthritis or other diseases.

Skin grafts help burn patients heal and often mean the difference between life and death. Skin grafts protect against infection and pain while the patient's own skin is healing. Many types of surgeries, such as open heart and urological surgeries, abdominal wall repair and post-mastectomy breast reconstruction also utilize skin grafts.

Veins and arteries are used in heart bypass surgery to re-establish blood circulation in patients with coronary artery disease. For those who have lost circulation in their legs, donated veins can help to avoid leg amputation.

Tissue donation is about Life.
Many are in need.
You have the power to save lives
and restore health.

Frequently Asked Questions about Tissue Donation

Who can be a donor?

Tissue donation is an option for most individuals, regardless of age, and is often possible even when organ donation is not. Your commitment to donate will not interfere with your medical care. At the time of death, trained medical staff will determine the medical suitability of the donor.

A history of cancer, diabetes, broken bones or some other illnesses or injuries does not necessarily prohibit tissue donation. Guidelines are followed to ensure that the donor is free of any infectious disease that might, in turn, harm a tissue recipient. Until all medical tests and screenings are complete, the tissue is not released for transplant.

How is donation accomplished?

Tissue donation becomes an option only after all lifesaving efforts have been made and the donor has died. After consent has been received, the donated tissue is recovered by skilled medical professionals in a surgical setting. The donor's body is treated with the utmost care and respect. Unlike organs, which must be transplanted within hours of donation, most tissue is preserved for later use. Tissue is stored in facilities called "tissue banks" and supplied to physicians when needed for their patients.



Joe, skin graft recipient

Burned over 65% of his body in a blaze that killed two of his fellow firefighters, Joe was given a 5% chance of survival. Donor skin tissue helped save his life and bring him back to his family.

Is all donated tissue used for transplantation?

When donated tissue cannot be used for transplantation, it may be used for approved medical education and research such as evaluating new disease treatments, improving transplantation and surgical techniques, and developing new medications. Using tissue for these purposes may be done only if the appropriate consent is given.

For Janine, an avid basketball and volleyball player, her world was turned upside down when a collision on the basketball court tore her anterior cruciate ligament (ACL). Only a knee operation—and the gift of donated tissue to replace her ligament—would restore her mobility. Thanks to a generous tissue donor, Janine has returned to the court and is a happy and active teenager again.



Janine, ligament recipient, ACL repair

Facts about Tissue Donation

FACT: All major religions support organ, eye and tissue donation as an unselfish act of charity.

FACT: Regardless of a donor's vision or existence of cataracts and other conditions, corneas have the potential to restore sight to a person with corneal blindness.

FACT: Tissue donation occurs within 12-24 hours of death and should not delay or change funeral arrangements. An open casket funeral is possible.

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

FACT: In the United States, it is illegal to buy or sell organs or tissue for transplantation.

FACT: To preserve anonymity, the identities of the donor and the recipients are confidential. Tissue-bank personnel may provide donor families with general information about how donated tissue was used.

FACT: Tissue is distributed based on patient need, availability and medical criteria. Tissue recipients range from newborns to senior citizens.

Visit www.donatelife.net for more information.



Debbi, skin graft recipient

During post-mastectomy reconstruction, Debbi received skin grafts as part of her treatment. "My tissue donor gave me the gift of feeling whole again."

How you can make a difference

Become one of the 60 million Americans who have registered their decision to be organ, eye and tissue donors!

Every individual has the power to save lives by donating their organs, eyes and tissue. By registering as a donor you will be entered in the Connecticut Donor Registry, which authorizes legal consent for donation.

You can join the registry several ways:

- First, check your driver's license or state ID card. If you have a red heart on the front, you are already registered in the Connecticut Donor Registry and do not need to take further steps.
- Say "yes" to becoming an organ and tissue donor when obtaining or renewing your driver's license at the Department of Motor Vehicles or AAA office.
- Sign-up online at www.DonateLifeCT.org.

As always, it is important to notify your family of your decision to be an organ, eye and tissue donor to avoid any confusion or delays.

For more information about the donor registry, Donate Life Connecticut projects, membership, volunteer opportunities, or to make a donation, please visit www.ctorganandtissuedonation.org.

