



**ASSOCIATION OF ORGAN
PROCUREMENT ORGANIZATIONS**

**Saving and improving lives
through organ, eye, and tissue donation**

MEDIA KIT

Sign up to be an organ donor @ RegisterMe.org/AOPO50K | www.aopo.org

8300 Greensboro Drive, #L1-620 | McLean, VA 22102 | media@aopo.org



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Who We Are

AOPO is saving and improving lives through organ, eye, and tissue donation, by leading the nation's organ donation process through innovation, advocacy, and education. AOPO advances organ donation and transplantation by driving continual improvement of the donation process, collaborating with stakeholders and sharing best practices with their OPO members.

Who We Serve

Organ Procurement Organizations (OPOs) represent a unique component of health care. By federal law, not-for-profit OPOs are the only organizations that can perform the life-saving mission and serve as the vital link between donors and patients waiting for life-saving organ transplants. OPOs work with donor families, hospitals and transplant programs to facilitate a successful donation and transplant matching process.



Mission

Lead the nation's organ donation community to save more lives.



Vision

Pursuing the day when every donation opportunity results in lives saved.

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About OPOs

Organ Procurement Organizations (OPOs) are the bridge between organ donors and recipients, working with donor families, hospitals, and transplant programs to facilitate a successful donation and transplant process. As federally designated organizations, OPOs coordinate every step, from evaluating potential donors to ensuring donated organs are matched and delivered to those in need. Through real-time collaboration and compassionate care, OPOs help turn the gift of donation into a second chance at life.



The Role of OPOs in Advancing Donation



! Independent hospital providers caring for the patient determine death before donation proceeds. Transplant centers make final decisions on organ acceptance and transplantation.

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The Donation Process

A person is evaluated for organ donation only after all life-saving measures have been attempted. The hospital staff working to save a patient's life is completely separate from the donation team or Organ Procurement Organization (OPO).



The donation process begins when a patient dies on a ventilator at the hospital. The hospital then notifies their local Organ Procurement Organization (OPO).



The OPO arrives at the hospital to perform initial screening and additional testing to determine the patient's medical suitability for organ, eye, and tissue donation



Authorization for donation is granted by either the patient's decision as a registered donor or through family consent.



The donor's information is entered into the national registry where it is matched with the most suitable recipients.



Once the transplant surgeon accepts the donation opportunity, the surgical team and OPO staff work together to recover the organs and tissue for donation and transport them to the hospital where the transplant will take place.



Donation occurs and the organs are transplanted into the recipients, giving them a second chance at life.

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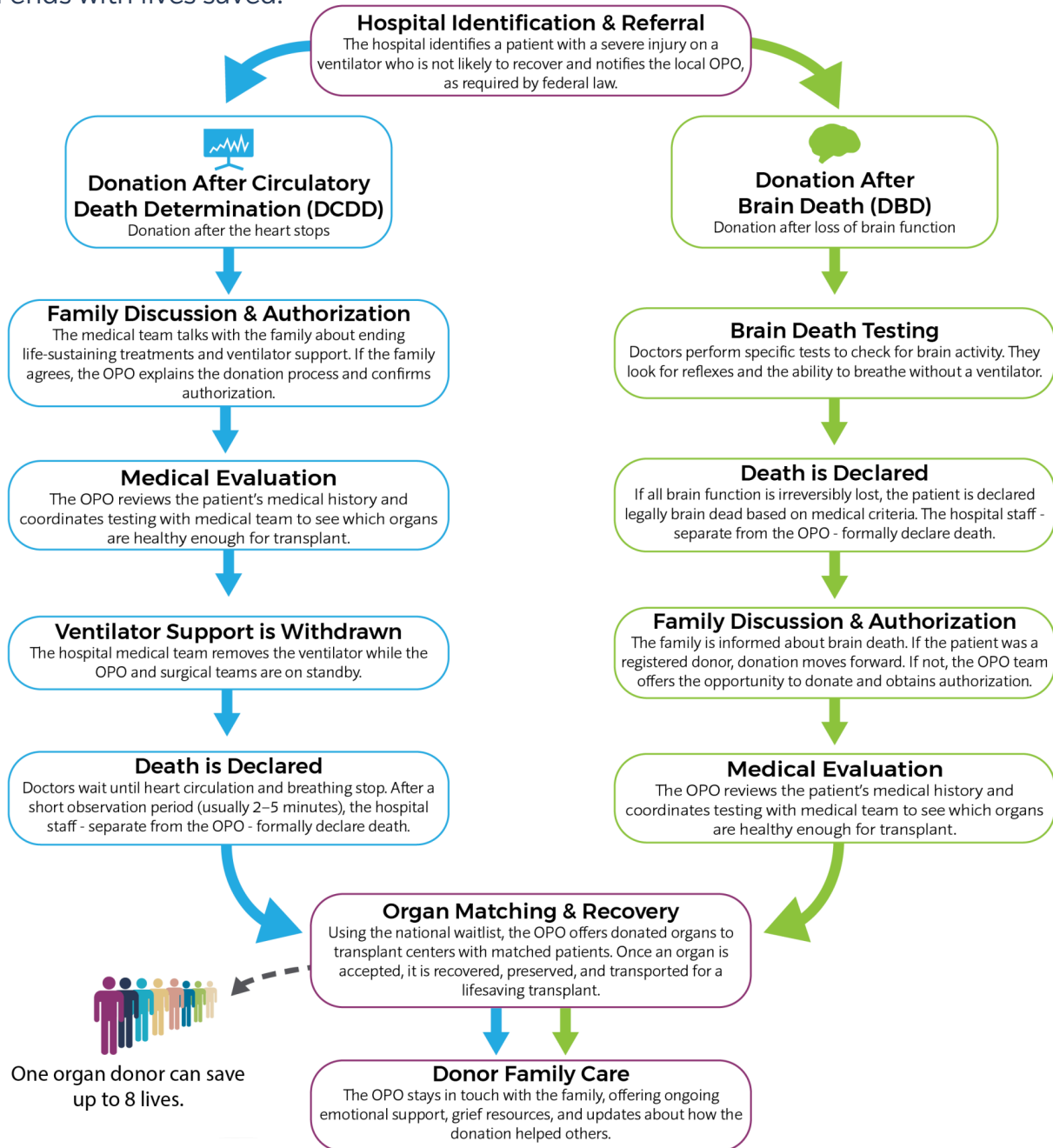


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The Two Pathways to Deceased Organ Donation

Organ donation is made possible thanks to the generosity of donors and their families, and the collaboration between hospitals, Organ Procurement Organizations (OPOs), and transplant centers. While there are two distinct clinical pathways to deceased donation, each one begins with a selfless gift and ends with lives saved.



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Quick Data and Facts



Organ Procurement Organizations (OPOs) in the United States



Every
another person is added to the organ transplant waiting list



people die every day waiting for an organ transplant



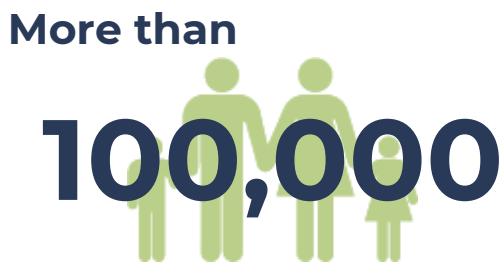
lives can be saved from one organ donor



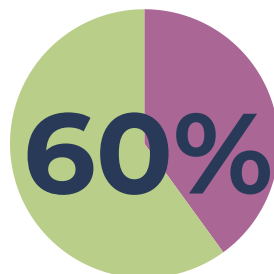
organ transplants performed every day on average



lives can be healed from one tissue donor



people are on the waiting list for an organ transplant



of those waiting for an organ transplant are minorities



Less than
of deaths in the United States result in organ donation

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What Can Be Donated?

Organ Donation:

Deceased organ donors can donate the kidneys, liver, lungs, heart, pancreas, and intestines

Living Donation:

Living organ donors can donate one kidney, lung, and portion of the liver

Tissue Donation:

A tissue donor can donate corneas, skin, heart valves, bones, veins, tendons, and ligaments



How To Register?

Because so few people who sign up can actually become donors, the more people who register, the more lives saved. Here are guidelines about registration.

Over 18:

All people age 18 and older can register to be an organ, eye, and tissue donor. You can choose what you wish to donate and you can change your status at any time.

Under 18:

In many states, people younger than 18 can also register, although their families will have the final say if the occasion arises for donation before they turn 18.

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Guide to Sensitive Language

To show respect for donors, their families, and the life-saving and life-enhancing gifts they've shared, it's important to use compassionate, accurate language when discussing organ, eye, and tissue donation. Outdated or harmful terms can spread misinformation and create fear or misunderstanding about donation.

AOPPO encourages the use of respectful, person-first language that reflects the generosity of donors and supports public trust. Below is a list of preferred terms to use when covering stories about donation and transplantation.



Say This

Donor/deceased donor/donor hero

Deceased donation

Recover

Ventilated/Mechanical Support

Determine brain death

Donated organs and tissues

Donation/gifts

Organ nonuse/organ utilization



Not This

Cadaver/cadaveric donor

Cadaver donation

Harvest

Life support

Declare brain death

Body parts

Parts

Discard

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Myths About Organ Donation

There are few limits on who can be an organ donor. Age, health, race and ethnicity do not play a role in organ donation. No one is too old or too young to be a deceased donor and most major religions support donation.

Will registering to be a donor affect my medical treatment?

Registering to be a donor will not affect your medical treatment if you become ill or injured. Organ and/or tissue recovery takes place only after all life-saving efforts have been exhausted and death has been legally declared. A transplant team is not contacted and no organs are removed before a person is pronounced dead – this includes brain death. The first priority is always to save a life.

What if I have a health condition?

Most illnesses and health conditions do not preclude you from donating your organs or tissues upon your death. At the time of death, doctors will examine your organs and determine whether they are suitable for donation. Only few conditions would absolutely prevent a person from becoming a donor—such as active cancer or a systemic infection.

At what age can someone become a donor?

Newborns and senior citizens into their 90s have been organ donors. The health of your organs, rather than your age, is most important.

Does my religion support donation?

The act of organ donation enjoys broad support among many religions in the United States. Some major religions have released official statements or policies about donation.

Can I be a living donor?

Most donations come from deceased donors. There are a few organs (a kidney, part of a liver, and lung) that can be donated by living donors. Living donors most frequently donate a kidney.

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SAVE MORE LIVES

50,000 ANNUAL ORGAN TRANSPLANTS IN 2026

AOPO members and stakeholders have committed themselves to a series of initiatives to reach the goal of achieving 50,000 annual organ transplants in 2026.



EXPAND COLLABORATION
across the AOPO
membership and among
all stakeholders.



DRIVE INNOVATION & RESEARCH
to increase donation and
maximize transplantation.



MAXIMIZE ORGAN UTILIZATION
by transplant programs.



REDUCE HEALTH INEQUITIES
to improve accessibility
of organ transplants in
minority communities.

PARTNER WITH AOPO TO SAVE MORE LIVES



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Media Contacts

Interested in a donation spokesperson? AOPPO can connect you with trusted experts in organ, eye, and tissue donation. From our President and Medical Directors to clinical staff and national leadership, we'll help you find the right voice for your story. Our spokespersons can speak to a wide range of topics related to donation, transplantation, and the mission to save more lives with accurate information and meaningful perspective to support your coverage.

For general media inquiries please contact
media@aopo.org



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