





How to give life



Kidneys, liver, heart, lungs ... while medicine is progressing by leaps and bounds, waiting lists for patients in need of a transplant are still as long as ever. Today more than 50 000 people in Europe are on waiting lists for a transplant. Every day **12 of them die because of the lack of available organs.**

**Since 1987 the European states** of the Council of Europe **have been working** to progress the ethical issues while respecting donors and recipients, to improve the organisational aspects of organ transplantation, and to promote the donation of organs in Europe.





Cornea



Lungs  
4hrs



Liver  
8hrs



Kidneys  
24hrs



Bone

Heart  
4hrs



Heart valves



Arteries  
Veins



Pancreas  
16hrs




Intestine  
8hrs




Skin




-  Immediate transplantation

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-  Conservation period

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-  Conservation in a tissue bank

# Organ donation

## Answers to frequently asked questions

### 1. Which organs are transplanted the most frequently?

The most frequently transplanted organs are:

- ♥ **the kidneys**, to remove the need for dialysis;
- ♥ **the pancreas**, to remove the need for insulin injections in certain patients;
- ♥ **the liver, lungs, heart or small intestine**, when these organs are no longer able to maintain the survival of the patient;
- ♥ **bone marrow**, which is used to restore the body's blood cells after anti-cancer therapy.

#### As regards tissue donation:

- ♥ **skin**, to treat serious burns;
- ♥ **heart valves or arteries**, due to certain medical conditions;
- ♥ **bones**;
- ♥ **the cornea**, when this thin protective film of the surface of the eye is damaged because of cataracts or an accident.

### 2. What transplants are carried out today?

**Almost all organs or tissues can be transplanted**, and the media regularly covers the progress being made. Modern transplantation techniques currently offer almost unlimited possibilities thanks to research carried out throughout the world, in particular regarding transplantation

from living donors. These transplants occur most often between members of the same family. The main advantages of this are the reduction in waiting times, the ability to plan a transplant operation instead of dealing with an emergency, and better quality results.

### 3. What is the difference between organ donation and whole body donation?

♥ **Organ and tissue donation for therapeutic** purposes focuses exclusively on the removal of organs or tissues that medical teams need in order to treat patients whose vital organs (or tissues) are severely damaged or completely destroyed.

♥ **Whole body donation to science** is when a person may request that their entire body be used for medical or scientific research after their death.

*The two types of donations are not incompatible: a person can donate their organs, tissues and body.*

### 4. When can a person give their organs or tissues?

♥ **When alive**, a person can, under very specific conditions, donate body parts for transplantation: a kidney, for example, or more rarely a part of the liver or lungs, or bone marrow cells or cells from particular organs, skin, cartilage, etc.

♥ **Following death**, the possibilities for donation are much wider: the gift of a heart, a liver, both lungs, the cornea, a pancreas, bones... but the donation must be carried out with very little delay, once death has been reported and confirmed by a doctor.

### 5. Is there a minimum age to become a donor?

**There is no age limit**; it is sufficient that the organ or tissue removed is healthy. But in the case of a minor, only the parents are authorised to

give consent for donation to take place and following special criteria to ensure the rights of the donor are respected.



## 6. When are the organs removed?

Only after a person is legally declared by a doctor to be brain dead. The organs are allowed to continue

to function artificially (artificial ventilation and perfusion).

## 7. How are organs removed?

The transplant team cannot perform the transplantation without first checking that the following conditions are met:

- ♥ **there are no legal or medical reasons** against the donation;
- ♥ **the person is not registered as being against donation;**
- ♥ **the family has been informed** and the testimony of the deceased

person on their wishes is always respected.

The removal of organs is a surgical procedure that is performed in an operating theatre following a very strict protocol where all the steps are followed so that the body is returned to the family under the best possible conditions.

## 8. Are transplantation procedures clearly defined?

**In Europe, absolutely.** Firstly, because these interventions can only be performed by highly specialised medical teams and in authorised medical centres.

Secondly, because in certain countries hospital co-ordinators are present throughout the process to ensure that the "rules of good practice" are respected.

Finally, because of all the precautions that are taken to preserve human dignity and protect the rights of the donor and the receiver. In fact, national laws in Europe govern donation and transplantation and prohibit the sale of organs, tissues and cells, and ensure the anonymity between donor and recipients is respected.





*A single donor  
can save  
several lives!*

## Organ donation

# How to get involved?



### SOME STATISTICS:

#### ♥ SPAIN

**35 donors** per million inhabitants  
or

#### ♥ AUSTRIA

**21 donors** per million inhabitants  
**have the highest proportions of donors** per capita in Europe

#### ♥ GERMANY

**15 donors** per million inhabitants

#### ♥ GREECE

**9 donors** per million inhabitants.

**At a personal level:**  
**choose to become a donor and make it known.**

♥ **Carry** an organ donor card: for a card, check with your country's authorities or with an organ donation association. Some addresses are listed on the next page.

♥ **Register** your pledge and talk to your loved ones about your wishes. Discuss your donation decision with your loved ones; it avoids them being faced with a difficult decision after your death.

♥ Your donation decision is not registered or filed with an official authority. **Remember always to keep the donor card with you**, preferably with an identity card, if necessary, this is what the emergency personnel and healthcare professionals check first. You can also leave your donor card with a close relative to consult after your death.

♥ **You are always free to change your mind.**

# Addresses and useful links to organisations in Europe

## ♥ Austria

Austrotransplant:

[www.austrotransplant.at](http://www.austrotransplant.at)

## ♥ BaltTransplant

(Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania):

[www.transplantacija.lt/content/apiemus.en](http://www.transplantacija.lt/content/apiemus.en)

## ♥ Belgium

Belgian Transplantation Society:

[www.transplant.be](http://www.transplant.be)

## ♥ Bulgaria

Bultransplant: [www.bgtransplant.bg](http://www.bgtransplant.bg)

## ♥ Croatia

Donor Network of Croatia: [www.hdm.hr](http://www.hdm.hr)

## ♥ Czech Republic

Czech Transplantation Coordinating Center

(KST): [www.kst.cz/web/home-en](http://www.kst.cz/web/home-en) and

Ministerstvo zdravotnictví České Republiky:

[www.mzcr.cz](http://www.mzcr.cz)

## ♥ Denmark

Dansk Center for Organdonation:

[www.organdonation.dk](http://www.organdonation.dk)

## ♥ Estonia

Tartu University Hospital:

[www.kliinikum.ee](http://www.kliinikum.ee)

## ♥ Eurotransplant International Foundation

(Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Germany,  
Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Slovenia):

[www.transplant.org](http://www.transplant.org)

## ♥ France

Agence de la biomédecine:

[www.agence-biomedecine.fr](http://www.agence-biomedecine.fr)

and Association pour le Don d'Organes et  
de Tissus humains: [www.france-adot.org](http://www.france-adot.org)

## ♥ Georgia

Georgian Association of Transplantologists:

[www.transplantation.ge](http://www.transplantation.ge)

## ♥ Germany

Deutsche Stiftung Organtransplantation:

[www.dso.de](http://www.dso.de)

and Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche  
Aufklärung: [www.bzga.de](http://www.bzga.de)

## ♥ Greece

Hellenic National Transplant Organization:

[www.eom.gr](http://www.eom.gr)

## ♥ Hungary

Hungaro transplant: [www.htp.hu](http://www.htp.hu)

## ♥ Ireland

National Organ Procurement Service:

[www.beaumont.ie/depts/support/transplant/organ\\_procurement.html](http://www.beaumont.ie/depts/support/transplant/organ_procurement.html)



## ♥ Italy

Centro Nazionale Trapianti (CNT): [www.trapianti.ministerosalute.it](http://www.trapianti.ministerosalute.it)  
and Associazione Italiana per la Donazione di Organi, Tessuti e Cellule (AIDO): [www.aido.it](http://www.aido.it)  
and Associazione Inter-Regionale Trapianti (AIRT): [www.airt.it](http://www.airt.it)  
and Nord Italia Transplant: [www.nitp.org](http://www.nitp.org)

## ♥ Latvia

see BaltTransplant.

## ♥ Lithuania

National Bureau on Transplantation: [www.transplantacija.lt/content/nuorodos/lietuvoje.en](http://www.transplantacija.lt/content/nuorodos/lietuvoje.en)

## ♥ Luxembourg

Ministère de la Santé: [www.dondorganes.public.lu](http://www.dondorganes.public.lu)

## ♥ Malta

Ministry for Social Policy: [www.sahha.gov.mt](http://www.sahha.gov.mt)  
and Transplant Support Group: [www.transplantsupport.com.mt](http://www.transplantsupport.com.mt)

## ♥ Moldova

Agentia de Transplant: [www.transplant.md](http://www.transplant.md)

## ♥ Netherlands

Nederlandse Transplantatie Vereniging: [www.transplantatievereniging.nl](http://www.transplantatievereniging.nl)

## ♥ Norway

Rikshospitalet / Radium Hospitalet: [www.rikshospitalet.no](http://www.rikshospitalet.no)  
and see also Scandiatransplant

## ♥ Poland

Poltransplant: [www.poltransplant.org.pl](http://www.poltransplant.org.pl)

## ♥ Portugal

Organização Portuguesa de Transplantação: [www.opt.min-saude.pt](http://www.opt.min-saude.pt)  
and Lusotransplante: [www.chsul.pt/main.asp](http://www.chsul.pt/main.asp)

## ♥ Romania

Romtransplant: [www.romtransplant.ro](http://www.romtransplant.ro)  
and National Transplant Agency: [www.transplant.ro](http://www.transplant.ro)

## ♥ Scandiatransplant

(Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden): [www.scandiatransplant.org](http://www.scandiatransplant.org)

## ♥ Slovak Republic

Slovenské Centrum Orgánových Transplantácií (SCOT): [www.ncot.sk](http://www.ncot.sk)

## ♥ Slovenia

Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for the Transplant of Organs and Tissues (Slovenija Transplant): [www.slovenija-transplant.si](http://www.slovenija-transplant.si)

## ♥ Spain

Organización Nacional de Trasplantes (ONT): [www.ont.es](http://www.ont.es)

## ♥ Sweden

Swedish Council for Organ and Tissue Donation: [www.donationsradet.se](http://www.donationsradet.se),  
see also Scandiatransplant.

## ♥ Switzerland

Fondation nationale Suisse pour le don et la transplantation d'organes: [www.swisstransplant.org](http://www.swisstransplant.org)  
[www.dondorganes.org](http://www.dondorganes.org)

## ♥ United Kingdom

UK Transplant: [www.uktransplant.org.uk](http://www.uktransplant.org.uk)

# Organ donation

## How does the Council of Europe contribute?

Photo © EDQM, Council of Europe



### FOUR MAIN PRINCIPLES GUIDE THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE IN THE FIELD OF ORGAN TRANSPLANTATION:

- ♥ ensuring the dignity of the human being;
- ♥ maintenance and further realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- ♥ non-commercialisation of substances of human origin;
- ♥ protection of donors and recipients.

A European Committee (Partial Agreement) on Organ Transplantation (CD-P-TO) is in charge of the organisational aspects of co-operation in organ transplantation. It is the European Directorate for the Quality of Medicines & HealthCare (EDQM, Council of Europe) that drives these activities at a European level. The Committee focuses on the development and promotion of non-commercialisation of organ donation, measures to strengthen the fight against organ trafficking and, more generally, the development of standards relating to ethics, quality and safety in this area. Today, 32 European countries, 6 observer countries, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the European Commission co-operate in this area. The result of this work is the publication of consensus reports intended to improve practices, international investigations and recommendations from the Committee of Ministers to its member states to develop national laws. A "Guide to safety and quality assurance for the transplantation of organs, tissues and cells" has been published (the 3rd edition with a substantial addendum was published in 2009). This guide is intended for all professionals involved in organ transplantation.

Since 1998, the Council of Europe has organised each year a European Day for Organ Donation and Transplantation to publicise this cause at a European level. Each year it supports a particular member state to promote this cause throughout their country.

For more information, please visit:  
[www.edqm.eu](http://www.edqm.eu)

[www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)