How to give life?

Organ donation,
Let's talk about it!

European Day for Organ Donation and transplantation (EODD)

With the EDQM, Council of Europe
Organ donation
How does the Council of Europe contribute?

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 on Organ Transplantation (CD-P-TO) is in charge of the organisational aspects of co-operation between Member States on 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, 36 European countries, 7 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 of the Council of Europe to its member states to develop national laws. A Guide to the quality and safety of organs for transplantation collates updated information to provide an easy-to-use source of reference and guidance to all professionals involved in organ transplantation.

Since 1996, 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                      www.coe.int
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 143 000 people in Europe are on waiting lists for a transplant. Every day **18 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, tissues and cells in Europe.**
Cornea

Lungs 4hrs

Liver 8hrs

Kidneys 24hrs

Bone

Heart 4hrs

Heart valves

Arteries Veins

Pancreas 16hrs

Intestine 8hrs

Skin

Immediate transplantation

Conservation period

Conservation in a tissue bank
Organ donation

Answers to frequently asked questions

1. Which organs, tissues or cells can be transplanted?

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;

As regards tissue donation:
- **skin**, to treat serious burns;
- **cardiovascular tissues**;
- **musculoskeletal tissues**;
- **ocular tissues** such as the cornea, when this thin protective film of the surface of the eye is damaged because of cataracts or an accident;
- **amniotic membrane**.

And cell donation:
- **bone Marrow**, which is used to restore the body’s blood cells after anti-cancer therapy;
- **peripheral blood and cord blood**.

2. 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.
3. When can a person give their organs or tissues?

There is no age limit on becoming an organ and/or tissue donor. But there are a few contraindications that may prevent you from donating organs/tissues. If you have expressed your wishes to become a donor, a healthcare professional will make an individualised assessment and decide whether your organs or tissue are suitable for transplant based on your medical, behavioural and exposure history.

4. Why it is important to become a donor?

Every hour new patients are added in Europe on a waiting list for a transplant. These patients on the waiting lists have families and children who need them. It could be us, our own family or loved one who needs an organ.

5. Why should you share your decision to become a donor?

When you get a card or register, it is very important to tell your family and friends about your decision. Even if you have a donor card or have your name on the organ donor registry (if applicable), when you die, doctors will ask your family or friends to confirm that you had not changed your mind.

6. Why should donation be free?

The notion of donation as an altruistic, generous «gift» has been highly valued since the very first transplants were performed. It is widely acknowledged that the removal of organs, tissues and cells for commercial gain opens the door to profiteering and to human trafficking and exploitation.
7. What are the different types of donation?

There are three different ways to donate. These are:

- **Brain stem death** – This is where a person no longer has activity in their brain stem due to a severe brain injury. They have permanently lost the potential for consciousness and the capacity to breathe. This may happen even when a ventilator is keeping the person’s heart beating and oxygen is circulated through their blood.

- **Circulatory death** – Is the irreversible loss of function of the heart and lungs after a cardiac arrest from which the patient cannot or should not be resuscitated. It can also be the planned withdrawal of life-sustaining treatment from a patient within the Intensive Care Unit or the Emergency Department.

- **Living donation** – Whilst you are still alive you can choose to donate a kidney, a small section of your liver, discarded bone from a hip or knee replacement and also your amniotic membrane (placenta).

8. 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 if applicable;
- the family has been informed sand 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.
A single donor can save several lives!
Organ donation
How to get involved?

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

- **Carry an** organ donor card or sign up to the organ donor registry in your country if it exists: 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;

- **If 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.**

**SOME STATISTICS**:

- **SPAIN**
  40 donors per million inhabitants

- **CROATIA**
  40 donors per million inhabitants

- **BELGIUM**
  31 donors per million inhabitants

- **SWITZERLAND**
  17 donors per million inhabitants

- **ROMANIA**
  6 donors per million inhabitants

*Actual deceased organ donors – Newsletter Transplant, EDOM, Vol. 21, 2016*
Addresses and useful links to organisations in Europe

- Austria
  www.bmg.gv.at
  www.goeg.at/de/Widerspruchsregister

- BaltTransplant
  (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania):
  www.transplantacija.lt

- Belgium
  www.health.belgium.be/en

- Bulgaria
  www.bgtransplant.bg
  www.bgdonor.com

- Croatia
  www.miz.hr and www.hdm.hr

- Cyprus
  www.moh.gov.cy

- Czech Republic
  www.mzcr.cz and www.kst.cz

- Denmark
  www.organdonation.dk

- Estonia
  www.kliinikum.ee
  www.elundidoonorlus.ee

- Eurotransplant International Foundation
  (Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Slovenia):
  www.eurotransplant.org

- Finland:
  see Scandiatransplant

- France
  www.agence-biomedecine.fr
  www.france-adot.org

- Georgia
  www.transplantion.ge

- Germany
  www.bzga.de and www.dso.de

- Greece
  www.eom.gr

- Hungary
  www.ovsz.hu/hu/oco/cimlap

- Ireland
  www.imb.ie

- Italy
  www.trapianti.salute.gov.it
  www.aido.it
Latvia
see BaltTransplant

Lithuania
www.transplantacija.lt

Luxembourg
www.ms.public.lu
www.dondorganes.public.lu

Malte
www.sahha.gov.mt

Netherlands
www.transplantatiestichting.nl
https://orgaandonatie.nu
www.donorregister.nl

Norway
http://helsedirektoratet.no
www.organdonasjon.no
see also Scandiatransplant

Poland
www.poltransplant.pl

Portugal
www.dgs.pt

Republic of Moldova
www.ms.gov.md

Romania
www.transplant.ro

Scandiatransplant
(Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden):
www.scandiatransplant.org

Slovak Republic
www.health.gov.sk and www.ncot.sk

Slovenia
www.slovenija-transplant.si

Spain
www.ont.es

Sweden
www.livsviktigt.se
www.socialstyrelsen.se/donations
registret/anmalan
see also Scandiatransplant

Switzerland
www.swisstransplant.org
www.vivre-partager.ch

Turkey
www.saglik.gov.tr
www.tonv.org.tr/en/

United Kingdom
www.organdonation.nhs.uk
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The Council of Europe is the main organisation for the protection of human rights on the continent. 28 out of its 47 member states are also members of the European Union. All the member states of the Council of Europe have signed the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty intended to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law.