



2011 Living Donation Fact Sheet

The American Transplant Foundation is a national nonprofit organization that works to increase the donation of organs and tissue to reduce the growing list of men, women and children who are awaiting a lifesaving transplant.

Living Donation

In the most common form of living donation, an individual donates one kidney or part of his or her liver to someone in need of a transplant due to kidney or liver failure. Potential living donors are required to undergo a series of medical and psychosocial tests in order to be deemed eligible. Though living donation rates had steadily increased since 1988, they have decreased slightly in recent years after peaking at 7,004 in 2004. Deceased donation rates have remained relatively steady at approximately 8,000 donors per year, comprising an average of 2.75 organs recovered per deceased donor. With a growing list of more than 111,000 waiting for transplants, doctors are turning to living donors to help meet the overwhelming need.

What can be donated by a living organ donor?

Most common:

- Kidney (entire organ)
- Liver (segment)

Tested and successful:

- Lung (lobe)

Rare

- Pancreas (portion)
- Intestines (portion)

Other types of living donations (non organ):

- Blood and bone marrow, and in some instances nerves and skin

Living Donor Facts

- There are two types of living donation: directed donations and non-directed (or altruistic) donations. Directed donors are either biologically or emotionally related to the recipient, while non-directed donors donate to an anonymous candidate on the waiting list.
- Living donors are typically between 18 and 60 years of age.
- The prospective donor must have a compatible blood type, and in the case of kidney donation, tissue type, as determined by lab tests of the donor and recipient.
- The donor candidate is carefully evaluated by lab tests, a physical examination, and a psychosocial examination to ensure that the candidate is healthy enough to donate and that he or she is making an informed decision.
- Statistically, a patient in need of a kidney transplant is more likely to find a tissue match with someone from the same ethnic background. Many minority populations experience higher rates of diabetes and hypertension, two leading causes of kidney failure, resulting in an even greater shortage of donors within minority communities. About 55% of the patients waiting for transplants are minorities.

Fast Facts about Organ Donation

- One deceased donor can save up to eight lives through organ donation and can save or enhance more than 100 lives through the lifesaving and healing gift of tissue donation.
- One person is added to the national transplant waiting list every 12 minutes.
- On average, 18 people die each day from the lack of available organs for transplant (~6,500 annually)
- Since data collection began 22 years ago, there have been approximately 111,912 recorded living donors.
- There are 111,778 people currently on the national transplant waiting list. Of these patients, 80% are waiting for kidneys and 14% are waiting for livers.

To learn more about living donation and the process of becoming a living donor, please visit www.AmericanTransplantFoundation.org/Living-Donation.

Statistics provided by the United Network for Organ Sharing and the US Census Bureau 2008 ACS

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