

# You have the power to Donate Life.

## MISSION STATEMENT

Donate Life Connecticut is dedicated to the purpose of public education and public 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 spread the word through events and projects that include:

National Donate Life Month

National Donor Sabbath

Health Fairs

Educational Presentations

Annual Poster Contest

College Campaign

Town Proclamations

Department of Motor Vehicle Alliance

Donor Family & Transplant Recipient Speakers Program



Connecticut

## DONATE LIFE CONNECTICUT

P.O. Box 4000

Woodbridge, CT 06525

Ph: 203-387-1549

Fax: 203-389-9902

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



Be an organ, eye and tissue donor.

Destiny, liver recipient



Connecticut

You have the power to change someone's world by being an organ, eye and tissue donor. It's about living. It's about Life.

Organ and tissue transplants offer patients a new chance at healthy, productive and normal lives and return them to their families, friends and communities.

Many African Americans have not considered being an organ, eye and tissue donor, because they are not aware of the critical shortage. Right now, more than 100,000 men, women and children are waiting for a lifesaving transplant. Nearly 30,000 of those waiting are African American.

African Americans make up 14 percent of the U.S. population and 14 percent of all organ donors, but they account for 35 percent of all patients nationwide waiting for kidney transplants. Nearly 5,500 African Americans received lifesaving transplants last year. Sadly, every 11 minutes another name is added to the organ transplant waiting list and an average of 18 people die each day, because there are not enough donors. You have the power to save lives, to share your life with others and make a lifesaving difference in the African American community.

### Protect your health

African Americans are at risk for many illnesses like high blood pressure, diabetes and heart disease that can lead to the need for an organ transplant. That's why it is so important to protect your health and prevent the future need for a transplant.

- Have your blood pressure checked at least twice a year.
- Limit foods high in salt, cholesterol and saturated fats, such as fried foods, that can clog the arteries.
- Visit your doctor at least once a year.
- Be sure to be tested for diabetes and other illnesses that can lead to organ failure.



Destiny, liver recipient

Destiny wants to be a doctor when she grows up. The active 6-year-old, who loves to climb, dance and play with her sisters, is the picture of health. Looking at Destiny today, it is hard to believe that as an infant she was diagnosed with biliary atresia and given six months to live. At one year of age, she weighed only 13 pounds and was desperately ill. Her only hope for survival was a liver transplant. Thanks to the generous gift of an organ donor, Destiny received her transplant and is now a normal first grader. She enjoys her favorite subject, math, and her future is bright.

## You have the power to Donate Life.

As a donor, you can help save or improve the lives of more than 50 people. Donation is a personal decision, and you can choose which organs and tissue to donate.

### Organs

heart  
intestines  
kidneys  
liver  
lungs  
pancreas

### Tissue

bones  
corneas  
heart valves  
skin  
tendons  
veins

Donated organs restore life. Tissue is needed to replace bone, tendons and ligaments lost to trauma, cancer or other diseases in order to improve strength, mobility and independence. Corneas are needed to restore sight. Skin grafts help burn patients heal and often mean the difference between life and death. Heart valves repair cardiac defects and damage.

You also can donate life to others as a living donor. Kidneys are the most common organ donated by living donors. The remaining kidney will enlarge, doing the work of two healthy kidneys. People also may donate a part of their liver, which will grow back and regain full function. Partial lung, intestine and pancreas donations can help others as well. Visit [www.donatelife.net](http://www.donatelife.net) for more information.

Organ, eye and tissue donation is all about Life. Many patients in the African American community are in need. Now is the best time to sit down with your family and talk about it. Let your family know your decision. Remember, you have the power to save lives.



Joe, tissue 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.

## Facts about Organ, Eye and Tissue Donation

There are many myths about donation and transplantation. But for something as important as saving lives, only the facts count.

**FACT:** Anyone can be a potential donor regardless of age, race or medical history.

**FACT:** All major religions support organ, eye and tissue donation and see it as a final act of love and generosity toward others.

**FACT:** Your commitment to donation will NOT interfere with your medical care. If you are sick or injured and admitted to the hospital, the number one priority is to save your life.

**FACT:** When you are on the waiting list for an organ, all that counts is the severity of your illness, time spent waiting, blood type and other important medical information.

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

**FACT:** An open casket funeral is possible for organ, eye and tissue donors. Through the entire donation process, the body is treated with care, respect and dignity.

**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 costs associated with funeral arrangements.

For more than seven years, JePahl endured dialysis treatments three times a week for four hours per session, leaving him exhausted and putting his future on hold. His father had suffered from the same kidney disease so he understood the struggle he faced. Too weak even to walk across a parking lot to see a movie with his brothers, he learned patience and perseverance. A kidney transplant restored JePahl's health and renewed his hopes and dreams. Now he is enjoying life to the fullest, including marrying the love of his life. "I appreciate being able to be the husband that she deserves," says JePahl. "My kidney transplant made that possible."



JePahl, kidney recipient



Mary, cornea recipient

Failing eyesight forced Mary to leave her job as a high school librarian. A cornea transplant restored her sight and allowed her to become the music director for her church.

## 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](http://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](http://www.ctorganandtissuedonation.org).**