

Ethnicity & Donation

Some diseases of the kidney, heart, lung, pancreas and liver are found more frequently among minorities than in the general population. For this reason, people in minority groups have a particularly high need for organ transplants.

For example, African-Americans comprise just 13% of the U.S. population, yet represent 32% of all U.S. patients receiving dialysis due to kidney failure. This is primarily due to the prevalence of hypertension and diabetes — both of which are leading causes of kidney disease — in the African-American community.

Compounding this problem is the fact that the number of African-Americans who are in need of transplantation is significantly disproportionate to the number who are registered organ donors.

Although organs are not matched according to race/ethnicity, and people of different races frequently match one another, all individuals waiting for an organ transplant will have a better chance of receiving one if there are large numbers of donors from their racial/ethnic background. This is because compatible blood types and tissue markers — critical qualities for donor/recipient matching — are more likely to be found among members of the same ethnicity.

A greater diversity of donors may potentially increase access to transplantation for everyone.

*Patients
from
multicultural
communities
make up
58% of
the national
waiting
list for a
life-saving
transplant.*

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MINORITY GROUP

STATISTICS

AFRICAN-AMERICAN

- 13% of the population is African-American.
- 30% of those waiting for an organ transplant are African-American.
- 33% of patients awaiting kidney transplant are African-American.
- 22% of all transplant recipients are African-American.
- 77% of African-American transplant recipients received kidneys.
- 16% of deceased donors were African-American.

HISPANIC/LATINO

- 17% of the population is Hispanic/Latino.
- 19% of those waiting for an organ transplant are Hispanic/Latino.
- 16% of all those who received transplants were Hispanic/Latino.
- 67% of Hispanic/Latino transplant recipients received kidneys.
- 20% of Hispanic/Latino transplant recipients received livers.
- 14% of deceased donors were Hispanic/Latino.

ASIAN, NATIVE HAWAIIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER

- Pacific Islanders are five times more likely to need an organ transplant.
- 71% of Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander transplant recipients received kidneys.
- 19% of Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander transplant recipients received livers.
- 3% of deceased donors were Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

Source: OPTN