

Transplantable Organs

HEART

The heart is a muscular organ that pumps blood through the blood vessels of our circulatory system. A heart transplant gives patients with congenital heart disease or ailments like cardiomyopathy and myocarditis the opportunity to have a normal heart with normal blood circulation. While a heart transplant is a major operation, chance of survival is good with appropriate follow-up care.

LUNGS

Lungs extract oxygen from the atmosphere and transfer it into our bloodstream. Donated lungs save the lives of those with cystic fibrosis, hypertension and end-stage COPD.

INTESTINES

Essentially, intestines are a long system of tubes that absorb nutrients and water from the food we consume and processes them in stages. Most intestinal transplants are performed on infants or children to heal conditions such as twisted or blocked intestines, or short gut syndrome.

LIVER

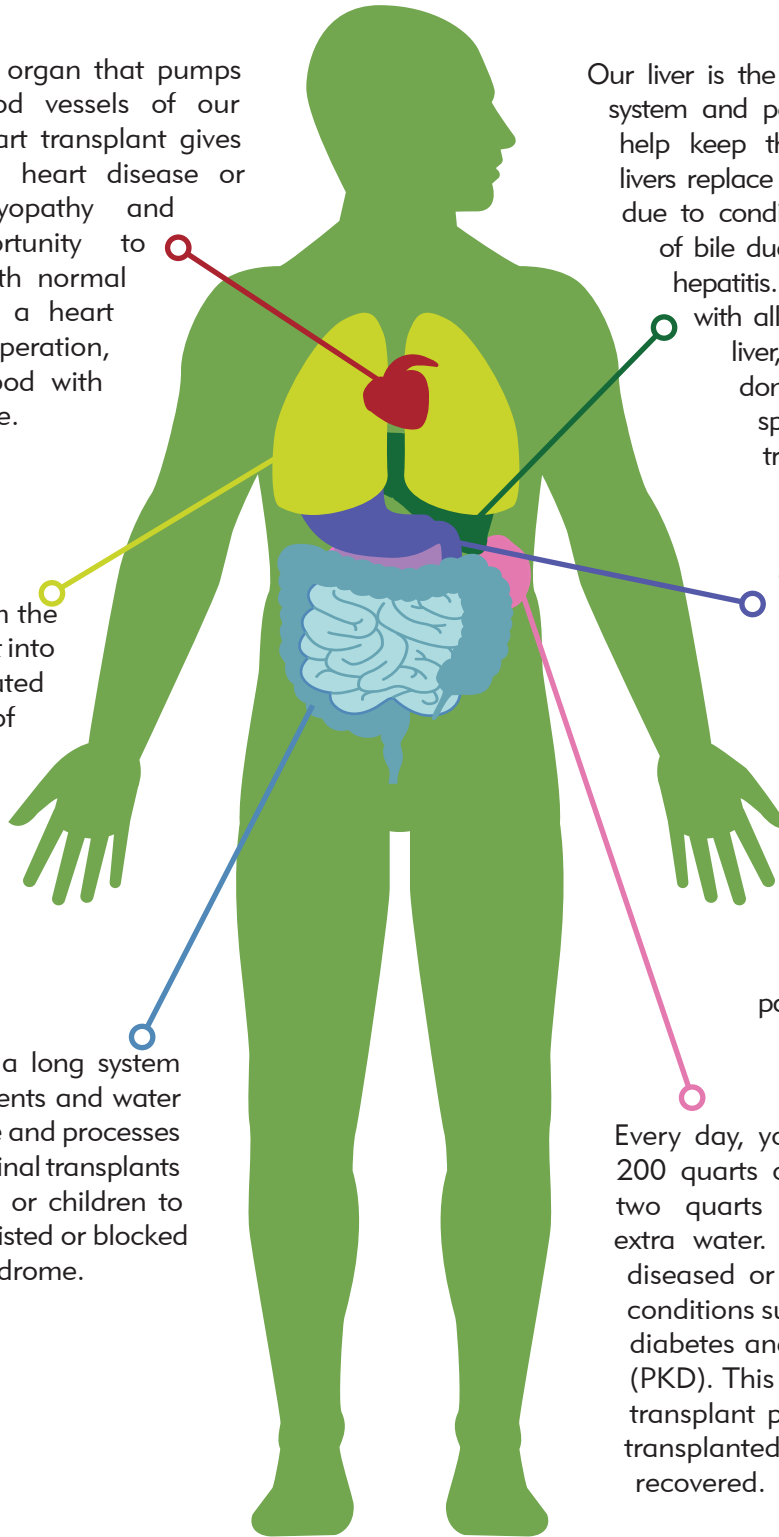
Our liver is the workhorse of the digestive system and performs 500 functions that help keep the body healthy. Donated livers replace diseased or damaged livers due to conditions such as birth defects of bile ducts as well as infections like hepatitis. A liver can be replaced with all or part of a healthy donor liver, from a living or deceased donor. Livers can also be split into two segments for transplantation.

PANCREAS

The pancreas creates digestive juices that help break down food that has left the stomach. It also produces the hormone insulin which regulates the body's sugar level. Individuals who have severe complications from diabetes can benefit from pancreas and/or combined kidney/pancreas transplants.

KIDNEYS

Every day, your kidneys process about 200 quarts of blood to sift out about two quarts of waste products and extra water. Donated kidneys replace diseased or damaged kidneys due to conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes and polycystic kidney disease (PKD). This is the most frequent organ transplant procedure. Kidneys can be transplanted up to 48 hours after being recovered.



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Transplantable Tissues



HEART VALVES

Donated heart valves can replace damaged ones, allowing the heart to function again. When used in young patients, these donated heart valves can actually “grow” with the recipient and reduce the need for repeated surgeries.



VEINS/ARTERIES

Donated veins can be used in patients who require coronary artery bypass surgery, a routine procedure that saves thousands of lives and allows these individuals to return to their normal lifestyles. For individuals suffering from diabetes or other diseases that cause a decrease in the blood flow, surgeons may use donated veins to repair damaged vessels and restore blood flow — in many cases, saving a recipient’s leg from amputation.



TENDONS/SOFT TISSUE

Soft tissues such as tendons, fascia and pericardium are used in ligament repairs, craniotomy and dural defects repairs, eyelid repair, periodontal surgery, and bladder suspension and repair.

CORNEAS



Every day, donated corneas help restore sight to individuals suffering from corneal blindness or trauma to the eye. More than 97% of all corneal transplant operations successfully restore the corneal recipient’s vision.

SKIN

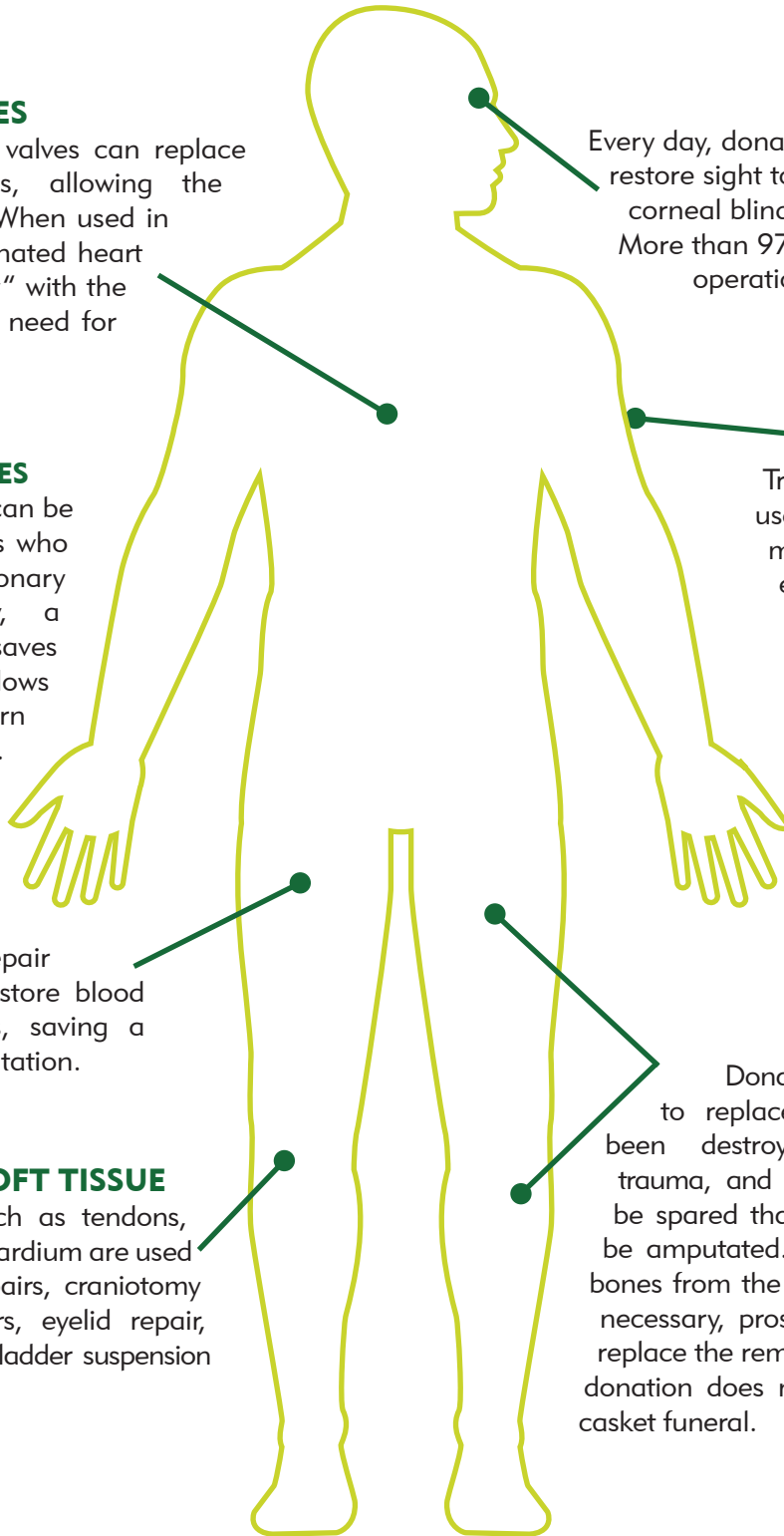


Transplanted skin is used as replacement tissue more than 1,000,000 times each year. Three quarters of this usage occurs in life-saving circumstances such as severe burns. Skin is removed in a thin layer, generally from the back, buttocks and back of the thighs. Skin donation does not interfere with an open casket funeral for the donor.

BONES



Donated bone is used to replace bone that has been destroyed by tumors, trauma, and infection, allowing limbs to be spared that would otherwise have to be amputated. Most frequently, the long bones from the legs are recovered. Where necessary, prosthetic devices are used to replace the removed bone, therefore, bone donation does not interfere with an open casket funeral.



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Bone Donation

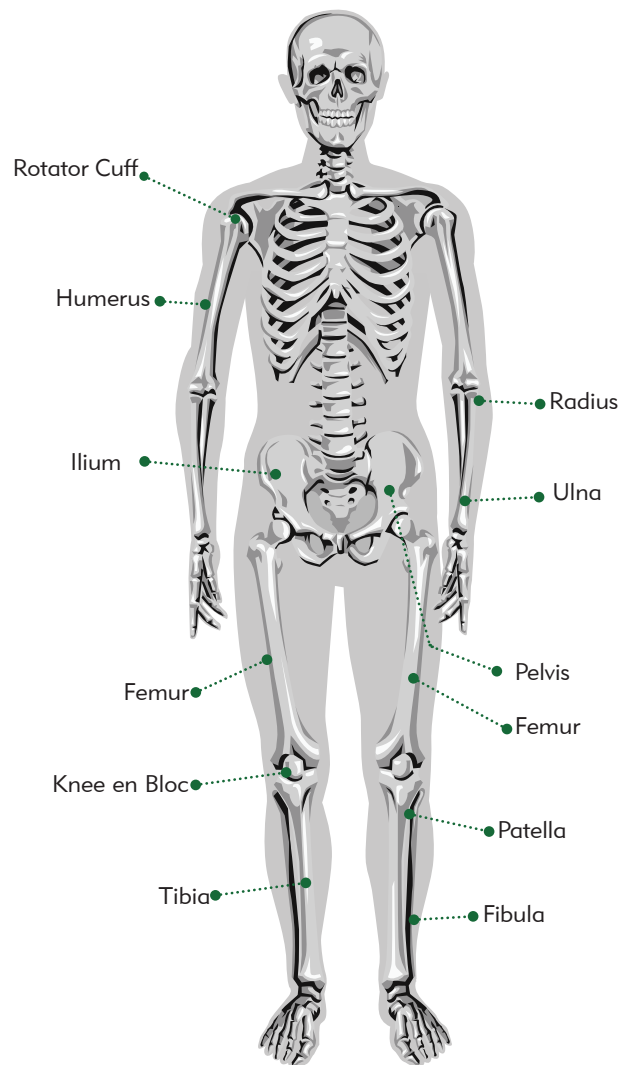
IMPORTANT FACTS

How does donor bone heal the recipient?

- During hip replacements that sometimes require extra bone
- To repair bone fractures
- To treat bone tumors — diseased bone is replaced by healthy donated bone
- As essential bone grafts used during spinal and dental surgery
- To save limbs from amputation

How is bone recovered?

A team of tissue procurement coordinators recovers the long bones in an aseptic surgical procedure and then replaces the recovered bone with prosthetic bone. Because such care is taken in the reconstruction process, a donor who has given bone may still have an open casket funeral. The recovered bone is used to create numerous healing grafts for transplant.



Cornea Donation

IMPORTANT FACTS

What is the cornea?

The cornea is the eye's outermost layer; the clear, dome-shaped surface that covers the front of the eye. When the cornea becomes cloudy or scarred, light cannot penetrate the eye to reach the light-sensitive retina. Poor vision or blindness may result. Currently, 10 million people worldwide are suffering from cornea blindness.

Is the whole eye transplanted?

No – only the cornea and surrounding area can be transplanted. However, with family authorization, a donor's entire eye may be recovered for use in research or education.

Who can donate corneas?

Anyone can. The great thing about corneal tissue is that everyone is a universal donor. Your blood type does not have to match. It doesn't matter how old you are, what color your eyes are or how good your eyesight is. Aside from those suffering from infections or a few highly communicable diseases such as HIV or hepatitis, most people are suitable donors.

How successful is corneal transplantation?

More than 97% of all corneal transplant operations successfully restore the corneal recipient's vision.

Will cornea donation affect a donor's appearance?

No. Great care is taken to preserve the donor's appearance. The donor's body is treated with respect at all times. Funeral arrangements, including an open-casket viewing, if desired, are possible.

