

# April is National Month

## Donation and Transplantation FAQs 2026

### What is National Donate Life Month (NDLM)?

April is **National Donate Life Month (NDLM)**, a time to honor those who have received transplants, recognize those still waiting, and celebrate the generosity of donors and donor families. Established by Donate Life America and partnering organizations in 2003, NDLM features local, regional, and national activities aimed at inspiring Americans to sign up as organ, tissue, and **cornea** donors and to celebrate the lives saved and healed through the gift of donation.

For **2026**, the "**Leave a Legacy**" theme is inspired trees, using them as a symbol of life and connection. Just like trees grow and support each other in a forest, donation connects people – donors, recipients, and their families. Like a tree that grows and stands for generations, a donor's gift leaves a lasting legacy of hope and life.

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### Who Can Be a Donor?

- **Deceased Donors:** People of all ages and medical histories can potentially donate. The ability to donate organs and tissues is determined by medical evaluation at the time of death.
  - **Living Donors:** Living donors must be in good physical and mental health and older than 18. Medical conditions such as uncontrolled high blood pressure or diabetes may prevent living donation. Transplant programs perform comprehensive evaluations to ensure the health and safety of both the donor and recipient.
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### Does Signing Up as a Donor Change My Patient Care?

No. Doctors work tirelessly to save every patient's life. Donation only becomes an option after there is a complete and irreversible loss of brain function, and the patient is declared clinically and legally dead.

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### Does My Religion Support Organ, Tissue, and Cornea Donation?

Yes. All major religions in the United States view donation as a final act of compassion, generosity, and love.

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## Is There a Cost to Be an Organ, Tissue, and Cornea Donor?

No. Donation costs are never passed on to the donor's family or estate. The family only covers medical expenses incurred before death and funeral arrangements.

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## Does My Social and/or Financial Status Play Any Part in Whether I Will Receive an Organ If I Need One?

No. A national system matches organs to patients on the waiting list based on:

- Blood type.
- Body size.
- Medical urgency.
- Time on the list.
- Distance from the donor hospital.

Factors such as race, income, gender, celebrity, or social status are never considered.

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## Why Should I Sign Up to Be a Donor?

Most Americans support donation as an opportunity to give life and health to others. However, many people don't take the crucial step of signing up. Here's why you should:

- **Save lives:** You can save up to 8 lives and heal 75+ more through organ, tissue, and cornea donation.
- **Ease your family's burden:** Registering your decision removes the need for your family to make this choice during a time of grief.
- **Be a symbol of hope:** Your registration serves as a promise to those waiting for a second chance.

Signing up to be a donor ensures your decision is honored and gives hope to those in need.

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## How Can I Sign Up to Be a Donor?

- **Sign up at your local Driver's License Center** when you receive or renew your license or ID.
- **Visit [core.org/register](https://core.org/register)** to sign up online—it only takes a minute.
- For more information about donation and transplantation, visit **[core.org](https://core.org)**.