

# **Organ Donation: Why & How?**

## **Why should we donate organ/s?**

The progress in medical science has made it possible for people with end stage organ disease to survive. But, this is possible only if they get the organ for transplant. An important point is, where will the organ come from?

A healthy person can donate one of his 2 kidneys or a part of the liver. But the heart & the lungs can only come from a dead person.

We know that person is dead when heart stops beating. Not many are aware that person is dead when brain is dead. When heart stops beating, all parts of the body cease to get blood supply and they too die. When brain dies, heart will stop beating very soon. So if a person is at home and develops brain death, his heart will soon stop. But if a brain dead person is in intensive care unit (ICU) of the hospital, the heart and respiration can be supported for few hours or days. During this period, if family consents, different parts of the body can be used for transplant and many lives can be saved. Unfortunately, this does not happen as it should in our country and many people with end stage organ disease die in our country.

Indian scenario:

Each year approximately 200,000 people develop end stage kidney disease (ESKD) in our country. Only about 4000 kidney transplants are performed – most of them with living related donors. Less than 10% of all kidney transplants are deceased donor (cadaver donor) transplants. Similarly, a large number of people develop end stage liver disease, heart disease and lung disease. But very few liver, lung and heart transplants are performed in our country.

As per the reports, the number of brain dead donors in developed countries is very high. For instance, in Spain one out of about 30,000, in Britain and USA one out of 37,000. In India, brain death donation rate is one out of 7.7lacs. The result is that most people with end stage organ disease get a transplant within a very short period in Spain while most people die waiting for transplant in India.

Having understood the extent of problem and the fact that donating organs after death can save many lives we all should pledge our organs after death. By doing so not only will we save many lives but reduce the need of living related donors.

Narmada Kidney Foundation, an NGO established in 1993 is actively engaged in spreading awareness about organ donation – both living and after brain death. It does so by ways of organizing seminars, health camps, events like Transplant Games in which the living donors and recipients participate every year and Organ Donors' Day when the living donors and family members of brain-dead donors are felicitated. The Donor's Day celebration includes awarding a certificate and a trophy to each living donor. In addition, the Foundation honors family members who consented to donating organs after the death of their near and dear one.

## **How can we donate organs?**

A living person can donate organ if he/she is healthy and medically fit to donate. However, there are stringent criteria. The Government requires a number of documents to be submitted for a living person to donate.

For a person to be able to donate organs after death, he/she should sign an organ donor card (Figure 1).

Three things are required to be done.

1. Fill up the card.
2. Share decision with the family so that all family members are aware of your wish. In fact, next of kin has to sign the card.
3. Always carry the card with you in your pocket.

# Organ Donor Card

## अव्यय दान पत्र

Keep this card always with you & share your decision with your family.

"Don't take your organs to heaven for  
God knows they are needed here"

Name : \_\_\_\_\_  
नाव : \_\_\_\_\_

Age : \_\_\_\_\_ Blood Group : \_\_\_\_\_  
वय : \_\_\_\_\_ रक्त गट : \_\_\_\_\_


**After my death, I would like to donate** Date \_\_\_\_\_

a.  Any part of my body or

b.  My Corneas  Kidneys  Heart  Lungs  Liver  Pancreas  
 Intestines for therapeutic purposes. Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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**Next of Kin** Name : \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address : \_\_\_\_\_  
Tel. \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_



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