

WELCOME TO National Donor Sabbath



Dear Faith Leaders,

Donate Life New York State (NYS) is an independent, statewide non-profit organization whose mission is to increase organ, eye, and tissue donation through advocacy, education, promotion, and research to ensure that every person in New York who needs a transplant receives one. We invite your congregation to participate in the upcoming National Donor Sabbath.

National Donor Sabbath is observed annually, two weekends before Thanksgiving, from Friday through Sunday (November 13-15, 2020). This three-day observance seeks to include the days of worship for major religions practiced in the United States. Faith leaders and their communities participate in services and programs to educate the public about the need for donation, the generosity of the gift and the importance of registering one's decision to be an organ, eye and tissue donor.

There are more than 9,500 New Yorkers currently waiting for lifesaving organ transplants and, sadly, more than 400 New Yorkers will die because the organ they need is not donated in time. But there is hope - one person can save 8 lives through organ donation, and enhance the lives of 75 more through eye and tissue donation.

Join us in celebrating National Donor Sabbath on November 13-15 by sharing the message of donation with your congregation and encouraging enrollment in the New York State Donate Life Registry (donatelife.ny.gov). Research has shown that one of the main reasons people hesitate to register is the belief that it is against their religion. All major religions in the U.S. consider organ donation to be a final act of love, charity and generosity. With your help, we can eliminate misconceptions and teach donation as a true act of compassion supported by faith.

We realize this has been a year of change and adaptation, but we hope that you will find a way to use the National Donor Sabbath resources provided in this toolkit. If you would like to arrange for a speaker during a virtual service or event, please contact Donate Life NYS at (518) 326-3237 or communications@dlnys.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Aisha M. Tator".

Aisha M. Tator
Executive Director
Donate Life New York State

A row of seven religious symbols: a cross, a snowflake, a Star of David, a crescent moon, the Om symbol, a yin-yang symbol, and a Khanda. Below these symbols is the text "BE A SYMBOL OF HOPE FOR THOSE WHO ARE WAITING." in large, bold, teal letters. At the bottom, in smaller teal letters, is the text "Register today to be an organ, eye and tissue donor."

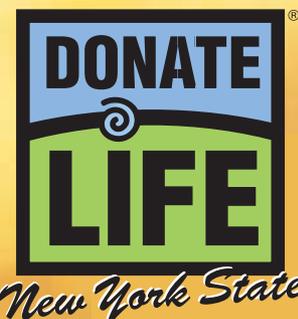
BE A SYMBOL OF HOPE FOR THOSE WHO ARE WAITING.
Register today to be an organ, eye and tissue donor.



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NATIONAL DONOR SABBATH
NOVEMBER 13-15, 2020

donatelifenys.org



A STORY OF HOPE

Kit's call to organ and tissue advocacy



Kit has always felt called to better the lives of others, and has been actively working for peace and justice through service since childhood. As an ordained minister in the Episcopal Church, the promise she made to “look for Christ in all others, being ready to serve those in need” and “serve all people, particularly the poor, the weak, the sick and the lonely” has served as a compass for her life. That compass guided Kit to her current role as a children’s hospital chaplain, where she serves the sick – including those touched by organ donation.

In her position as hospital chaplain, Kit is there to provide spiritual and emotional support for donor families from the very beginning. Recognizing donation to be a sacred and personal decision, Kit feels honored to work with these families, assisting with any spiritual questions that may arise related to donation.

“I never cease to be moved by the grace and compassion to help save and heal the lives of others that I witness by parents in the midst of facing the worst day of their own lives,” says Kit, adding that she often learns of the comfort families ultimately receive because their loved one was able to help those in need.

Kit’s role also gives her the privilege and joy of supporting families who have received an organ transplant. She gets to know chronically ill patients and their families as they await a lifesaving gift – ranging from a few weeks to a few years – and then shares in their relief upon receiving it.

“Loving your neighbor as yourself” and “respecting the dignity of all people” are part of the baptismal covenant of Kit’s faith that she works to honor each day. These statements guide her to give and care for others, and to always respect the wishes of each person and family. Knowing that other major religions support organ donation, Kit believes it to be a spiritual act. She is both a donation advocate, and a registered organ eye and tissue donor herself.

Kit sums up her feelings like this: “Giving of one’s self to help another is an act of grace. For me, the final act of literally giving of my body to others through organ, eye, and tissue donation would be my final act of serving others... and there is nothing more important than saving a life.”

“I feel humbled to be a part of the extensive support team that gets to experience the miracle of transplantation and the life-changing results. I am thankful to everyone who makes it possible, especially the donors and their families.”



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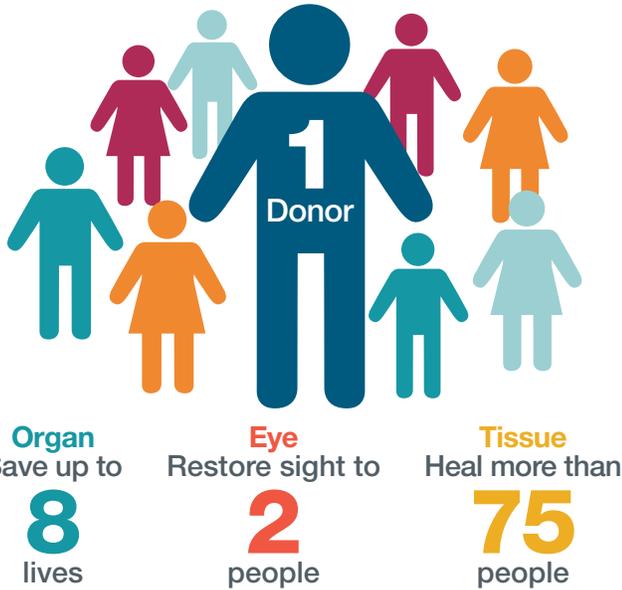
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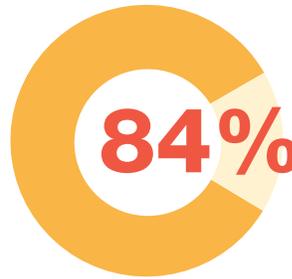
100,000+ men, women and children await lifesaving organ transplants, and hundreds more are in need of corneal and tissue transplants.

Deceased Donation

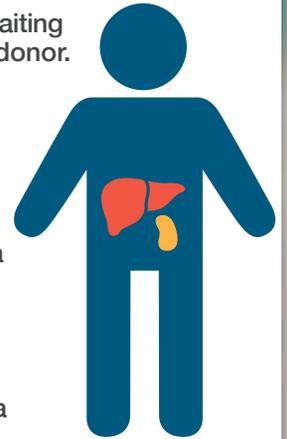


Living Donation

3-5 years is the average waiting time for a kidney from a deceased donor.



of patients waiting are in need of a kidney.



Living donors can provide a kidney or a portion of their liver to a waiting patient.*

*Living donation is not included in your donor registration.

39,700 organ transplants from 19,300 donors gave new life to patients in 2019.

85,000 donated corneas are provided for sight-restoring transplants each year.

58,000 tissue donors provide lifesaving and healing tissue for transplant each year.



Top 5 Frequently Asked Questions

Does registering as a donor change my patient care?

No. Doctors work hard to save the patient's life, but sometimes there is a complete and irreversible loss of brain function. The patient is declared clinically and legally dead. Only then is organ donation an option.

Will I be able to have an open casket funeral if I donate?

An open casket funeral is possible for organ, eye and tissue donors.

Does my religion support organ, eye and tissue donation?

All major religions support donation as a final act of compassion and generosity.

Does my social or financial status play any part in whether or not I will receive an organ?

A national system matches available organs from the donor with people on the waiting list based on many factors, including: blood type, body size, how sick they are, distance from donor hospital and time on the list. Race, income, gender, celebrity and social status are never considered.

Why register your decision to be a donor?

You can save up to 8 lives and heal more than 75 people. Your registration also relieves your family of the burden of making the decision at a time of sadness and grief.

What can I do to increase organ, eye and tissue donation?



Register your decision to be a donor at donatelifenys.org.



Tell your family and friends about your decision to *Donate Life*.



Ask others to visit donatelifenys.org to learn more and register.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

on National Donor Sabbath



- ① Send an email to your community members (see sample) to share the importance of organ and tissue donation and encourage them to enroll.
- ② Invite members of your congregation who have been personally impacted by donation or transplantation to speak, or request a speaker from Donate Life NYS.
- ③ Include information about organ and tissue donation in bulletins and newsletters.
- ④ Highlight religious beliefs on organ and tissue donation during activities and services.
- ⑤ Share the graphic included in this toolkit on your social media platforms (see sample copy).
- ⑥ Put a link on your website with the call to action “Enroll in the New York State Donate Life Registry at donatelife.ny.gov/register”
- ⑦ Get involved year-round! There are many ways to help increase organ, eye and tissue donation. Please reach out to Donate Life NYS to join our mailing list and to discuss other ways our communities can work together to save more lives in New York.

**TO CONTACT DONATE LIFE NEW YORK STATE:
CALL: (518) 326-3237 * EMAIL: INFO@DLNYS.ORG
DONATELIFENYS.ORG**

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BE A SYMBOL OF HOPE FOR THOSE WHO ARE WAITING.
Register today to be an organ, eye and tissue donor.

SAMPLE EMAIL

to your faith community



Subject Line: National Donor Sabbath

[Organization] invites you to join us in observing National Donor Sabbath (November 13-15). We are partnering with Donate Life New York State (NYS) to pray for health for organ transplant recipients, strength for those waiting, and healing for donor families. National Donor Sabbath also offers a time to give thanks for registered organ, eye and tissue donors, living donors and the legacy of life given by deceased donors.

[Your thoughts on faith and the gift of life here]

As members of our community, you and I can work together to increase organ and tissue donation rates in New York and help save more lives. I urge you to take just a moment out of your day to enroll as an organ, eye and tissue donor at donatelifeny.gov/register; then share your decision with friends and family to encourage them to do the same.

One person can save 8 lives as an organ donor, and can help and heal as many as 75 more as an eye and tissue donor. Please consider giving the gift of life today.

Thank you,

SAMPLE COPY

for your social media platforms

During #NationalDonorSabbath, be a symbol of hope for those who are waiting. Enroll as an organ, eye and tissue donor at donatelifeny.gov/register and help @DonateLifeNYS save more lives!

