



## 2021 Donor Alliance Fact Sheet

Donor Alliance is the federally designated, non-profit organ procurement organization and tissue bank serving Colorado and most of Wyoming. As a recognized leader in facilitating the donation and recovery of transplantable organs and tissues, Donor Alliance's mission is to save lives through organ and tissue donation and transplantation.

To achieve this mission, Donor Alliance employs an effective family approach and recovery programs in 115 hospitals. Donor Alliance also inspires the public to sign up to be organ and tissue donors through community partnerships, public outreach and education campaigns throughout our donation service area.

### Fast Facts About Organ and Tissue Donation:

#### Local Colorado and Wyoming stats:

- A record **215** organ donors saved **622** lives in 2020; that's a **13%** increase in organ donors and **4%** increase in lives saved compared to 2019.
- Additionally, Donor Alliance assisted in **39** of the region's **118** transplants from living donors in 2020.
- Donor Alliance recovered tissue for transplant from a **1,899** donors.
- There are **1,595** people waiting for a lifesaving organ transplant.
- Of those waiting, **1,342** are waiting for a kidney—the organ most in need (84%)—and **189** are waiting for a liver (12%).
- Of those waiting for an organ transplant, **29%** are under 50 years of age; another **41%** are between 50 and 64.
- Colorado has the nation's highest-performing state donor registry with **68%** of driver license/ID card applicants signing up to be organ and tissue donors. Wyoming is also amongst the top five nationally at **62%**.
- Of those **215** organ donors, **74%** were signed up on the Donate Life Colorado or Wyoming Donor Registry.
- Of those **1,899** tissue donors, **72%** were signed up on the Donate Life Colorado or Wyoming Donor Registry.
- Donor Alliance's Donor Service Area serves six million residents and covers 184,151 square miles – this includes all of Colorado and most of Wyoming.

#### National stats & facts:

- **12,587** people provided the lifesaving gift of organ donation upon their death last year, making 2020 the 10th consecutive record-breaking year for deceased donation in the United States, a **6%** increase over 2019.
- Because of those generous **12,587** organ donors, **33,309** organ transplants were performed in the United States in 2020, setting an annual record for the 10th year.
- Additionally, **5,725** living donor transplants were performed in 2020.
- Today, **108,089** people are waiting for lifesaving organ transplants nationally.
- Of the patients waiting, **91,480** (85%) are in need of a kidney and **11,932** (11%) are in need of a liver transplant.
- Transplantable organs include the heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, pancreas and small intestine.
- Recoverable tissues include bone, tendons, corneas, veins, valves and skin.
- One donor can save up to **eight lives** through organ donation and can save and heal more than **75 lives** through tissue donation.
- On average, **20** people die each day while waiting for a lifesaving transplant.
- On average, about **95** transplants take place each day in the United States.
- Every **10** minutes another name is added to the national transplant waiting list.
- More than **one million** tissue transplants are performed annually in the United States.



Learn more about organ and tissue donation, at [www.DonorAlliance.org](http://www.DonorAlliance.org) or call 303-329-4747.

Residents can join the *Donate Life* Colorado or Wyoming Registries by visiting:

[www.DonateLifeColorado.org](http://www.DonateLifeColorado.org) or [www.DonateLifeWyoming.org](http://www.DonateLifeWyoming.org)

Statistics provided by the United Network for Organ Sharing, [www.unos.org](http://www.unos.org) & Eye Bank Association of America

Last updated: January 12, 2021 [Based on OPTN data as of January 12, 2021]



## Frequently Asked Questions about Organ and Tissue Donation:

- **What is organ and tissue donation?**

Organ and tissue donation is the process of recovering organs and tissues from a deceased person and transplanting them into others in order to save the lives of those in need. Up to eight lives can be saved per individual donor through organ donation and more than 75 lives can be saved and healed through eye and tissue donation.

- **What is the process for organ and tissue donation?**

Organ, eye and tissue donation becomes an option only after all lifesaving efforts have been exhausted and death has been declared. If a patient meets clinical criteria, the hospital contacts Donor Alliance, the organ procurement organization serving Colorado and most of Wyoming. Donor Alliance determines medical suitability for donation and collaborates with the hospital to ensure the family is cared for and informed throughout the process. If a donor is determined to be a candidate for organ donation, medical matching information including size, blood and tissue type is entered into a database to determine the most suitable candidate in need of a lifesaving transplant. Donated eyes and tissues do not require preliminary matching. Organs and tissues are then recovered in a surgical environment by highly trained medical professionals. Organs must be transplanted into waiting patients in hospital transplant centers within hours of recovery. Tissue undergoes complex evaluation and processing into many therapeutic forms for future surgeries, and can be transplanted even after lengthy preservation periods.

- **What are the benefits of organ and tissue donation?**

At the time of their death, just one donor can save up to eight lives through organ donation and save and heal more than 75 lives through eye and tissue donation. Saying Yes to organ, eye and tissue donation saves lives. Every year, organ, eye and tissue transplants provide hope to tens of thousands of people suffering from disease, injury, trauma or blindness. Transplants offer patients a new chance at healthy and productive lives, returning them to their families, friends and communities. Transplantation requires the commitment of organ, eye and tissue donors to save and heal lives. There continues to be a great need for more people to sign up to give the gift of life.

- **How do Colorado and Wyoming residents become organ and tissue donors?**

Residents can sign up to be organ, eye and tissue donors at the time of death by saying Yes each time they obtain or renew a driver license or state ID, or at [www.DonateLifeColorado.org](http://www.DonateLifeColorado.org) or <http://www.DonateLifeWyoming.org/> anytime. Anyone can sign up to be an organ, eye and tissue donor, regardless of age, race, medical history, religion or income. Even those with chronic conditions, such as hepatitis and diabetes, can sign up to give the gift of life at any age.

- **How are organs allocated to recipients?**

When a deceased organ donor is identified, a transplant coordinator from an organ procurement organization, like Donor Alliance, accesses The United Network for Organ Sharing's (UNOS) secure, centralized computer network and enters necessary medical information about the donor. The system uses this information to match the medical characteristics of the candidates waiting against those of the donor. The system then generates a ranked list of patients who are suitable to receive each organ. Some of the key elements considered in matching organs from deceased donors to patients on the waiting list are: blood type, body size, severity of patient's medical condition, distance between the donor's hospital and the patient's hospital, the patient's waiting time, and the availability of the potential recipient (e.g., the patient can be contacted and has no current infection or other temporary reason that transplant cannot take place).

- **Does Donor Alliance facilitate living donation AND deceased donation?**

Donor Alliance only facilitates deceased donation. Donor Alliance supports the altruistic gift of living organ donation and sees it as a beneficial way to help close the gap in the waiting list and available organs. Donor Alliance is not responsible for facilitating or coordinating living donation; it is the responsibility of transplant centers.



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