

A scenic landscape at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm orange and yellow glow across the sky, which is filled with dark, dramatic clouds. The foreground is a hillside covered in numerous small, vibrant purple flowers. In the background, there are layers of blue-toned mountains, creating a sense of depth and tranquility.


# ORGAN, EYE, AND TISSUE DONATION

A GUIDE FOR FAMILIES

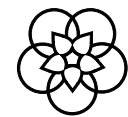
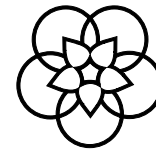
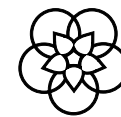


Utah Lions Eye Bank  
John A. Moran Eye Center





Please accept our heartfelt  
sympathies on the loss  
of your loved one.



On behalf of DonorConnect, we would like to express our deepest sympathy for the loss of your loved one. It is our hope that this brochure will answer some of your questions about organ and/or tissue donation. A DonorConnect representative will be available to explain the donation process and answer any questions you may have.





## OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

Through organ, eye and tissue donation, we at DonorConnect: save and heal lives - honor donors - educate and inspire.



DonorConnect is the federally designated, nonprofit community service organization dedicated to the recovery and transplantation of organs and tissues for Utah, southeastern Idaho, western Wyoming, and Elko, Nevada. Our service area encompasses 3.8 million residents, 94 hospitals, and three transplant centers – Primary Children’s Hospital, Intermountain Medical Center, University of Utah Hospital (along with the George E. Wahlen Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center).

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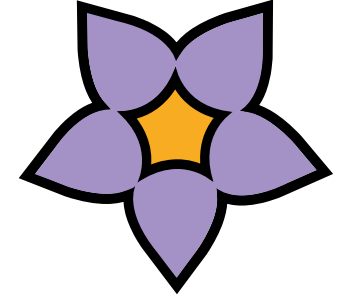
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## A letter from a donor family to an organ recipient:

### Why Donate?



Many families believe that donation and the act of helping others can bring them comfort after the loss of a loved one. Transplantation gives recipients a chance to lead normal, productive lives. It is possible for a single donor to give organs and/or tissue to several different people and save and heal many lives.



Did you know: Approximately 114,000 people in the United States are currently on the waiting list for a life-saving organ transplant. Another name is added to the National Transplant Waiting List every 10 minutes. On average, 20 people die every day from the lack of available organs for transplant. ([organdonor.gov/statistics-stories/statistics.html](http://organdonor.gov/statistics-stories/statistics.html))



Transplantation is always the first priority, but, if during our assessment an organ or tissue is not suitable for transplant, you may elect for your loved one's organs and/or tissues to be used for scientific research. This type of donation can be imperative in helping treat many medical conditions and making advancements.

*"My husband and I talked many times about organ donation. We both wanted to help someone, if possible, in the event of our own death. When it became apparent that my husband's brain was losing all function and he was not going to survive, the idea of organ donation became a reality. After watching him slowly leave me, I became selfish. I didn't want to have him go through any more procedures and tests, and I didn't want to have to deal with anything else.*

*I had had enough for one day! Yet, when it really came down to it, I knew what he would have wanted. I had to carry out his wishes. How grateful I am that I made that decision on his behalf!*

*It has brought much comfort to me to know that other people have benefited and have found happiness and improved health because of our decision. Losing a spouse is an awful thing (something I did not think I would have to deal with for many, many years), but knowing that some good came from his death has been helpful in dealing with my grief. It has also been helpful to explain to my children that other lives have been changed for the better because of their dad's willingness to donate his organs.*

*Your letter reaffirmed the reasons why organ donation is so important. It reaffirmed to me that I made the right choice and that good things can come out of sad and tragic circumstances. It has also helped me to see how people's lives can be interconnected. I know my husband would be pleased to know that he was able to help – something he was always willing to do. Most of all, I am grateful that some good was able to come as a result of his death."*



## THE GIFT OF SIGHT



When I was 13-years-old, the vision in my left eye started to decline rapidly. I was diagnosed with Keratoconus, a hereditary disease. I was told then that I would need a cornea transplant in the near future. Growing up, my eyesight greatly impacted my ability to play sports and other activities. Then one day around 19 years of age, I woke up with excruciating pain in my eye and a white spot called corneal hydrops. My cornea had ruptured and was leaking fluid. Until I could get my cornea transplant, I had to use daily medications, wear dark sunglasses, and deal with pain.

For roughly ten years, I have spent a lot of time thinking about my cornea donor. I initially felt guilty that someone had to pass away for me to be able to be healthy and have the gift of sight. I didn't want to be the reason that their family was reminded of something so traumatic and sad. But I was also very grateful for their gift and wanted to be able to express my gratitude to them. I hope to meet them one day so that they can see how much this gift has impacted my life.



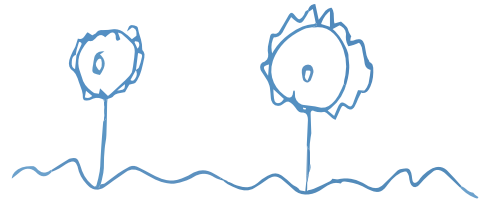
The Utah Lions Eye Bank – John A. Moran Eye Center has been facilitating the gift of sight worldwide through transplantation and research since 1972. For those who can see by simply slipping on a pair of glasses or for those who can see without any correction, the gift of sight is something that is easily taken for granted. We go through our daily activities often overlooking life's modest wonders, like the smile on someone's face. The gift of sight changes not only the lives of all those around them. It allows loved ones to once again share in life's simple pleasures, whether that be something as significant as seeing the birth of a child or as simple as seeing the leaves change color on the trees: the gift of sight has no end.

Two types of procurement procedures are used when honoring a family's wishes for eye tissue donation with either being performed as quickly as possible after death. Cornea donation is intended to restore sight to a visually impaired individual requiring a cornea transplant. There are two main types of corneal transplant procedures: full thickness corneal transplant and partial thickness corneal transplant. Alternatively, whole eye donation is generally performed for the purposes of research and/or education. Corneas are whole eyes that are recovered in a sterile manner by a specially trained technician. Prosthetics are put in place to minimize any potential change in appearance.



Donor Family,

Hi I am Ethan. I am 10.  
My mom recieved  
Jonathan's kindly and  
pancreas. I am so thankful  
because it saved my  
mom's life. I am  
eternally grateful.



thank you so much!  
Ethan



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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### Who can donate?

Only after all attempts have been made to save a person's life does the option of donation become available. A DonorConnect representative will then help you with all aspects of donation. General tests and health questions will be asked to assess eligibility for donation.

Donation is a truly unique and rare opportunity to save and heal the lives of others. Specific medical criteria must be met in order to move forward with donation. Your DonorConnect representative is here to answer questions about all aspects of the process from start to finish.

### Is there a cost to donate?

You will not be charged for anything associated with donation. All costs related to donation will be paid for by DonorConnect. Hospital costs incurred before the authorization for donation remain the responsibility of the family. If you receive a bill from the hospital or funeral home that you feel should be covered by DonorConnect, please contact us directly.

(See "Contact Us" section on page 16)

### Is a viewing/open casket funeral an option following donation?

Donation does not interfere with your ability to have an open casket funeral for your loved one. Your DonorConnect representative can work with you through donation so that it does not impact your ability to have a viewing. If you decide to hold a viewing, you may want to choose clothing for your loved one with a high neckline, long sleeves, long pants, or a long dress due to possible incisions. Complications such as swelling, bleeding, and/or bruising are rare, but can occur as with any surgical procedure or autopsy. Every effort is made to minimize these complications.

### Will DonorConnect help with funeral or obituary expenses?

DonorConnect is not permitted legally to financially assist with funeral arrangements or obituary costs. If the mortuary charges extra due to donation, or if you choose to use the Donate Life symbol in your loved one's obituary, DonorConnect will cover the additional cost of these items only.

### Will an autopsy interfere with organ donation?

Not at all. DonorConnect will work closely with all medical entities to make sure that donation will not interfere with an autopsy.

### Will I find out who the organ and/or tissue recipients are?

Your family will receive a letter from our Donor Family Services team in the coming weeks that explains what organs were recovered and transplanted. You may also be given basic information about the recipients who were helped because of your generous decision to donate. Tissue processing can take more time, but additional information will be sent to your family regarding tissue outcomes when they become available to us.

### Can I write to my loved one's organ and/or tissue recipients?

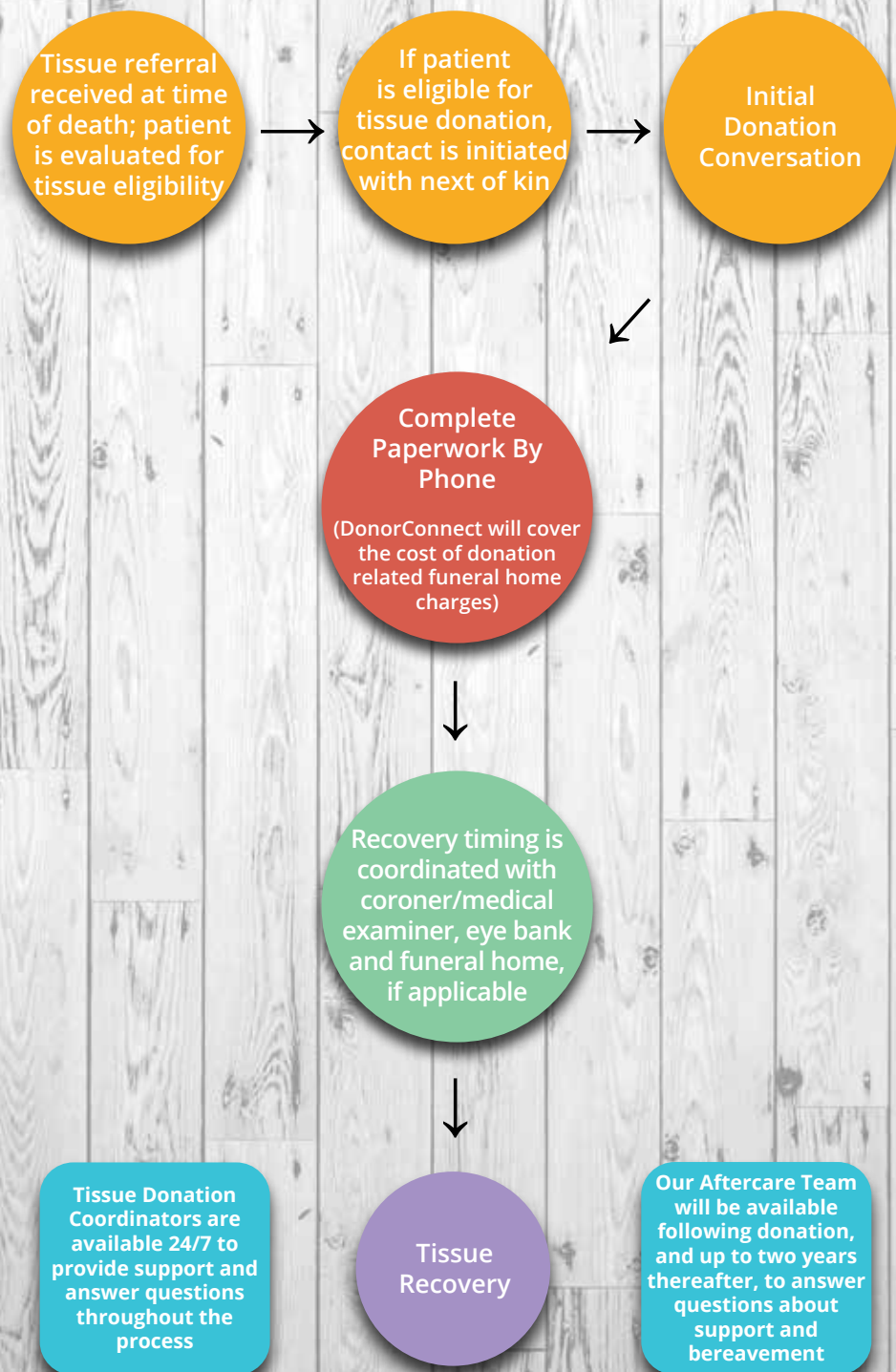
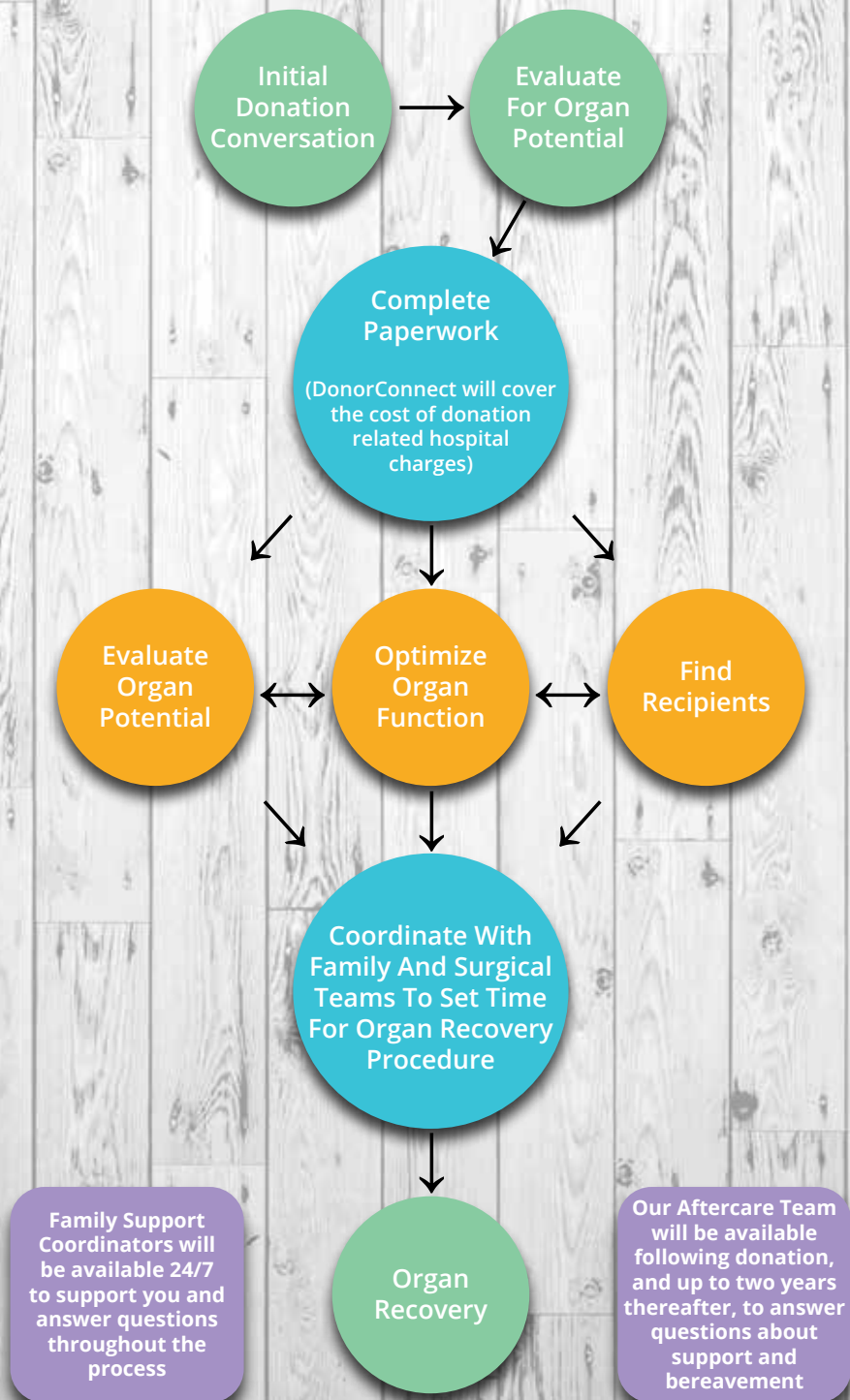
Yes! We encourage corresponding with recipients if you feel comfortable to do so. Our Donor Family Services team is here to help facilitate this.

(See "Contact Us" section on page 16)

### What does the donation timeline look like?

The timeline for donation can vary extensively, and your DonorConnect representative will help guide you through what to expect in the upcoming hours/days.







## Understanding your **GRIEF** experience

It can be difficult to adequately express, and even understand how you are feeling. As you navigate this road ahead of losing a loved one and the accompanying grief, it is important to remember that everyone deals with grief differently. Give yourself and your family time and compassion while moving through these emotions. Be kind and patient with yourself.

DonorConnect has compiled some useful resources for grief support. Your DonorConnect representative has specific brochures and resources upon request, and you can find additional details on our website here:

[www.donorconnect.life/donor-family-services/grief-support](http://www.donorconnect.life/donor-family-services/grief-support)



## How Does Tissue Donation Save and Heal Lives?

- Corneas restore sight.
- Skin grafts are a temporary covering to reduce pain and lower the chance of infection to patients with severe burns. They can also be used to help rebuild breast tissue after mastectomy surgery, as well as for abdominal surgeries.
- Heart valves help children born with heart problems or adults who have heart valves damaged by disease.
- Bone and associated tissue such as tendons and ligaments may be used to repair damage caused by trauma or disease.
- Blood vessels improve circulation and can be used for patients in need of heart bypass surgery, dialysis, and may prevent amputation of limbs.





# CHECKLIST

## OF THINGS TO DO

### FAMILY CHECKLIST:

Many people have suggested that it is useful to have a checklist to help determine what they might be faced with during the first several days and weeks following the death of a loved one.

#### Family members and friends can help with:

- ☐ Making a list of family, friends, employers, and business colleagues to be notified by phone.
- ☐ Notifying children's schools.
- ☐ Answering the phone or door and keeping a record of all calls and people visiting.
- ☐ Coordinating food for the family for the next few days.
- ☐ Coordinating special needs of the household such as childcare, cleaning, grocery shopping, etc.

#### You may need to:

- ☐ Contact your bank concerning any existing accounts.
- ☐ Notify life insurance companies, creditors, credit card companies, & auto insurance company of the death.
- ☐ Contact your local Social Security office, if you are eligible for benefits and to report the death.
- ☐ Close social media accounts or turn them into tribute pages.
- ☐ Notify utilities and landlord, if the deceased was living alone; tell the post office where to send mail; take precautions against theft.

## CONTACT US



### Donor Family Services Team

Aftercare: 801-478-7350 or 1-800-833-6667  
Email: [familyservices@donorconnect.life](mailto:familyservices@donorconnect.life)  
[www.donorconnect.life/donor-family-services](http://www.donorconnect.life/donor-family-services)



### General Inquiries - DonorConnect

Phone: 801-521-1755  
6065 S. Fashion Blvd. Ste. 125  
Murray, UT 84107  
[www.donorconnect.life](http://www.donorconnect.life)



**Our appreciation extends to you and your family for choosing the unique and exceptional gift of donation.**  
**The gift of life.**

## DISCLOSURES:

### Organ Donation:

Donation gives one person the chance to save lives. Even with advances in medicine and technology, there is no substitute for a human organ. People suffering from organ failure die every day because there are more people waiting than there are organs available. When donor families give the gift of life, they are comforted knowing some good has come from their loss.

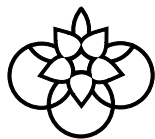
Organs for life-saving transplants include heart, lungs, liver, pancreas, kidneys, and intestines. Organ recovery can only take place after a person, who is on a ventilator, has been declared dead.

### Tissue Donation:

All tissues are recovered in accordance to professional standards, national policies, and regulatory laws by specially trained technicians in a way that is similar to a surgical procedure. Incisions are made, and the tissues removed. Prosthetics are put in place of the bones or tissues that are removed to minimize any change in appearance. The incision areas are then closed with sutures, similar to a surgical procedure.

## Biopsies:

In some cases, a biopsy (the removal and examination of tissue, cells, and/or fluid) may need to be performed to ensure the organs and/or tissues are healthy for transplant. A biopsy may be taken from skin, bone, connective tissue, and/or organs.



### International:

Due to the need of transplantable corneas and tissue in other parts of the world for humanitarian reasons, DonorConnect is increasing its efforts to meet this demand. Due to various factors (such as age) donation would be possible to benefit people in other countries. We are committed to delivering the highest level of care and service to our donors, their families, recipients, and medical professionals.

### Other Agencies:

In order to benefit the greatest number of recipients, both non-profit and for-profit organizations may be involved in the process. This may include agencies that recover, process, and distribute tissues as well as courier/transport services.

### Transplant Purposes Only:

You may direct your gift of donation to be used for transplant purposes only. If the organs, eyes, and tissue cannot be used for transplantation, they will be handled according to state regulatory law.

## Transmissible Disease Testing:

Part of the donor evaluation process requires transmissible disease testing. These tests are performed to ensure the safety of transplant recipients. Positive results will be reported to the State Department of Health Services, as required by law.

## NOTES



## NOTES

## NOTES



SUBMISSION PROCESS

The Celebration of Life  
Monument honors those

who have given the Gift of Life and brought healing to others through organ, eye, tissue, whole-body, and living donation.

The monument was built as a tribute to donors and their families and to inspire others to save lives through donation.

The Celebration of Life Monument features:

- ▶ 20 Glass Panels which bear the names of living and deceased donors whose selfless gifts saved and improved the lives of others.
- ▶ The Fountain symbolizes the profound ripple effect of each donor, whose donation saved or healed the lives of many.
- ▶ The Statues show recipients joyfully living everyday moments after receiving a transplant.

Gathering

Every year, a gathering is held for all families who submitted their loved one's name that year. An invitation will be sent to the address you provide. More information about the gathering can be found on [www.donorconnect.life/celebration-of-life-gathering/](http://www.donorconnect.life/celebration-of-life-gathering/)

Name Location Directory

The locations of new names added become available online in late August. To view, go to [www.donorconnect.life/monument-name-search/](http://www.donorconnect.life/monument-name-search/) and search by the donor's last name. Each name has a panel and row number associated with it. The panels are numbered near the base. Each panel has 50 rows of names.

Notice

Due to limited space, it is necessary to move panels to a different location as future names are added. A donor's name will remain at the monument for approximately 6-10 years. After that time, the panel will be moved to another public location. The online directory of name locations will be updated to display the panel's new location.

If your loved one was a donor and has any connection to the DonorConnect region, their name can be engraved on the glass panels of the monument. This service is **our gift to you, and free of charge**. Forms must be completed by the legal next of kin or power of attorney for deceased donors. Living donors must complete and sign their own form. *Forms are due by June 1st every year to be included in the annual August engraving.*

**DONOR'S NAME** (Underline any additional letters that need to be capitalized)

First:													
Middle:													
Last:													

☐ Deceased Donor      ☐ Living Donor

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY -----

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to donor: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Donation: \_\_\_\_\_  
(estimate)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail** | Tear at perforation, fold in half, tape closed, and mail to the address on the back of this card.

**Scan and Email** | [familyservices@donorconnect.life](mailto:familyservices@donorconnect.life)

You will receive confirmation by email or letter in the mail when your form is received and processed.

**QUESTIONS?**

Call | 801.478.7350    Email | [monument@donorconnect.life](mailto:monument@donorconnect.life)

Web | [www.donorconnect.life/celebration-of-life-monument/](http://www.donorconnect.life/celebration-of-life-monument/)



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