Organ and tissue donation
In brief

BZgA
Bundeszentrale
für
gesundheitliche
Aufklärung

ORGAN
SPENDE
Die Entscheidung zählt!

Sick or disabled people can get a second chance of a new or better life from an organ or tissue transplant. This can only be done by people consenting when still alive to donate their organs and/or tissues after their death. We therefore ask you to consider this important issue of organ and tissue donation, make your own personal choice and document it!

Requirements

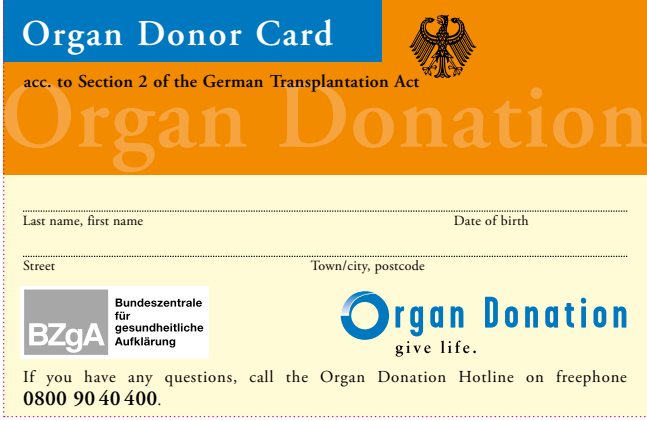
Organs and tissues may only be removed – providing consent has been provided – if irreversible functional failure of the brain ("brain death") has been established beyond doubt. For tissue removal, it is sufficient for a person's cardiac cycle to have failed for over three hours.

Age limits

Young people aged 16 and above can declare their consent to donate their organs and/or tissues without the approval of a parent or guardian. Minors aged 14 and above may oppose the removal of their organs or tissues. There is no fixed maximum age limit for organ donation. The actual biological state of the organs is the decisive factor. All organs and tissues are thoroughly examined before any transplantation. For this reason, there is no need to have a prior medical examination to donate your organs and/or tissues after your death.

You can donate the following organs:
Heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, pancreas, intestine.

You can donate the following tissues:
Cornea and sclera of the eyes, heart valves, skin, blood vessels, bony, cartilaginous and soft tissue as well as tissue obtained from the pancreas or liver. Unlike organs, tissues are generally not transplanted directly. They are preserved and temporarily stored in tissue banks until a suitable recipient is found.



Fill out the Organ Donor Card clearly and legibly and keep it with the personal papers that you always carry on your person.

Documenting your decision

You have the following options to document your decision:

- Organ Donation Register
- Organ Donor Card
- Advance Healthcare Directive (living will)

Documenting your decision also takes pressure off your relatives. If your wishes have not been documented, your relatives have to decide what to do based on what they know or presume to be the wishes of the deceased. If the presumed wishes cannot be determined, your relatives will be asked to decide in accordance with their own personal views.

Organ Donation Register

The register became operational in 2024. Please visit organspende-register.de to find out how you can save your decision online in the register. You can enter your decision in the register voluntarily and free of charge. It can be changed or revoked at any time. As an alternative to the electronic documentation, you can also document your decision on an Organ Donor Card or in an Advance Healthcare Directive (living will).

Organ Donor Card

The Organ Donor Card ensures that your personal wishes are respected. Should you wish to change your decision, simply dispose of the old card and fill in a new one.

Organ Donation Declaration

If **organ/tissue donation** for **transplantation** is possible **after my death**, I declare:

◯ **YES**, I give permission for organs and tissue to be taken from my body after a doctor has certified my death.

or ◯ **YES**, I give permission for the use of organs and tissue, **except** the following:

.....

or ◯ **YES**, I give my permission, but **only** for the following organs and tissue:

.....

or ◯ **NO**, I do not wish organs or tissue to be taken from my body.

or ◯ The following person should decide YES or NO:

.....
Last name, first name Telephone number

.....
Street Town/city, postcode

.....
Space for **notes/additional information**

DATE SIGNATURE

The back of the card offers five possible decisions. Please tick only one of the five declarations.

For information on documenting the decision in an Advance Healthcare Directive (living will), please visit organspende-info.de/organspendeausweis-patientenverfuegung

Organ Donation Hotline

If you have any further questions, call the Organ Donation Hotline on freephone 0800 90 40 400, Monday to Friday 9.00 to 18.00.

Infotelefon Organspende
0800 90 40 400

Further questions

You can e-mail your questions to BZgA at organspende@bzga.de. Information is also available online at organspende-info.de. You can also ask your family doctor for advice.

Further information material

On the subject of organ and tissue donation:
shop.bzga.de/alle-kategorien/organspende/

Publication
Publisher: Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA), Maarweg 149–161, 50825 Cologne, Germany · www.bzga.de
Printing: in a carbon-neutral process · Warlich Druck Meckenheim GmbH, Am Hambuch 5, 53340 Meckenheim
Edition: 3.90.10.24 · Article number: 60180070