



Ten Key Facts About The “Gift of Life”

(NAPSA)—While some people may think that those over 50 are too old to donate the “gift of life,” the facts, fortunately, are otherwise. According to the Health Resources and Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, individuals in their 50s, 60s, 70s and beyond can become organ, eye and tissue donors. People over 50 can receive transplants as well.

More people today are living healthier lives than those in previous generations and know the importance of exercise, healthy living and eating well. As a result, they’re in better shape than ever and able to be donors—as well as recipients—at older ages than anyone might have imagined.

If you’re over the age of 50 and not currently registered as an organ, eye and tissue donor, here are 10 facts you should know about donation:

1. The need is tremendous. More than 110,000 people are on the national waiting list for an organ transplant. Each week, over 100 of them will not receive an organ in time to save their lives.

2. Any age is the right age. Your age doesn’t make you ineligible to register, nor do you have to be in perfect health.

3. You can sign up at any age. Just nine days shy of his 93rd birthday, Carlton Blackburn became the nation’s oldest organ donor, following his death from a brain hemorrhage. Thanks to his gift, the life of a 69-year-old woman suffering from end-stage liver disease was saved.

4. People over 50 years old comprise the largest age group by far of those waiting for organ transplants; they account for about 60 percent of those on the national waiting list.



Many people have discovered a way to save lives: Sign up to be an organ, eye and tissue donor.

5. The United States has more than 94 million people 50 or older. If the majority of people in this age group registered as donors, imagine how many lives could be saved.

6. Eight lives or more can be saved by one donor. There are eight organs that can be recovered from a donor and transplanted. The heart, liver, kidneys, pancreas, lungs and small intestines can all be transplanted.

7. Tissue donors can improve many lives. Corneas, heart valves, veins, tendons, bone and skin can all be donated and transplanted to improve lives.

8. Most religions in the United States support the gift of life as an act of charitable giving.

9. The estate or family of an organ, eye or tissue donor incurs absolutely no cost for donation.

10. It’s easy to register. Learn how to register at organdonor.gov. Remember to tell your family members, so they can support your wishes.

If you or someone you know would like to register as an organ donor, you can learn more at www.organdonor.gov—an informational website from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.