

More Than an Organ

Informative

by Jaleigh Gluhm

Plain white walls, bright lights, faces of strangers and loved ones praying for a miracle. They pray for an organ, whether it's a heart, a kidney, liver, or maybe even lungs . The crazy thing is, due to the lack of donors so many of those patients don't receive an organ. There is a complicated process that goes along with receiving and giving of organs. Not enough people are donors so the process can take way longer than necessary, and sometimes patients don't have time to wait; too many of them pass before they ever receive an organ.

According to Donate Life America's statistics, 82% of patients are waiting in need of a kidney and 22 people die each day because the organ they need is not available in time. That's roughly 8,000 deaths a year. Let's face it. We need to ask the question of why. Why aren't people registering to be donors when so many agree that the process is morally right? Why are there so many lies made that lead to poorly made choices when it comes to giving medically? Personally, I believe being a donor is not well talked about, a lot of information is missing and too many assumptions are made. So, let's put some light on a few things and bring people to truth. Let's lead them to a responsibility that we all share as an individual and as a community.

I was always taught to give. We are all neighbors, whether we know it or not. If we can give, we should, it's biblical. When a person passes, the case of why doesn't matter, if there is nothing that can be done to bring them back, then why not donate tissues to save another life. A life taken, can be a life given. I don't mean to sound harsh whatsoever, but people need to know that just because they register as a donor does not mean that in a life-threatening situation the professionals are going to let them die. That is not the case and never will be. Life is a priority. It's simply saving what you can and giving your organs, bones, or tissues to someone who is in desperate need of them. There are many myths that go on when it comes to being an organ donor.

Pretty much all those myths are false; age, previous health issues, and religions rarely keep someone from being an organ donor. Many parts of the human body can be repurposed.

According to American Transplant Foundation, there are 6,000 living donations every year, meaning both the donor and the receiver live. That's just living alone. There are roughly 37,000 organ transplants every year, which may sound like a lot, but sadly it is not enough. Even with these important statistics, it may or may not change anything, but hopefully more people will understand how important it is to register to be a donor.

It's easy to be a donor, so here's a little information about the processes after the donation and why some may not receive the organ they need. First off, it comes to blood type and compatibility. There are certain rules that go along with receiving an organ, if not given the organ with the right compatibility then the patient's body will reject the organ and go into a shutdown. So, doctors have to be very careful to collect organs that contain the same blood type as the patient. There are three main blood types, O, A, AB, and B. Donors with O can give to anyone with the same or different blood type. Blood type A can give to either A or AB patients and the same goes for people who contain B blood type. Then patients who have AB blood can receive from anyone, but cannot give to anyone except other AB's. That's just one part of the very complex process. That's why it is so hard for patients to receive what they need. There's just so many variations.

I hope that some light was shed on the truths of being an organ donor. It is very important to do our part and serve the community. It's more than just a selfless act, it's more than just a responsibility. It's a gift, being able to leave this life and give to another is a reward greater than

anyone could imagine. Be an organ donor, because it's more than an organ, it's a life, it's a miracle, it's an answered prayer.