

MISSION STATEMENT

Southwest Transplant Alliance exists to save and improve lives by providing organs and tissues for transplantation.

We distinguish ourselves by forging meaningful relationships with donor families and the communities we serve in order to realize every possible donation.

VISION STATEMENT

Every organ and tissue donation opportunity is realized as long as the need exists.



DONATION IS GOOD END-OF-LIFE CARE

The vast majority of religions approve of organ and tissue donation as a charitable act of giving. Yet, some families think it is against their religion. They feel torn between the opportunity to make a positive, valuable contribution and what they believe is a tenet of their faith system.

As the spiritual advisor for your hospital's patients and families, you are in a position to make a significant difference. *Organ and tissue donation is a chance to make a positive, valuable contribution from a tragic death.* In fact, studies show that donating the organs and tissue of a loved one who has died helps family members through their grieving process.

DONATION SAVES LIVES

One donor can save or improve many lives. Organs needed are hearts, kidneys, livers, intestines, pancreas and lungs. Tissues needed for medical transplant include corneas, skin, bone and heart valves.

The need for lifesaving organs is critical. In Texas alone, more than 6,000 men, women, and children are waiting for the gift of life. About 20 Americans die every day while waiting for a life-saving transplant.

THE DONATION DISCUSSION

Many donor families have said that they have found great comfort in the donation of their loved ones' organs and tissues. To ensure that the families' wishes are honored, and to maximize donation in your hospital, please keep in mind the following:

- ▶ Federal law mandates that only STA staff or those trained and certified by STA are to initiate the discussion of donation with families. Having STA's trained family support staff do the approach allows the family to identify the hospital staff as the individuals working to save their loved one.
- ▶ Families need to understand and accept brain death before donation is brought up. Experience shows families are not receptive to donation unless they understand and accept brain death.
- ▶ Do not mention the notification of STA to the family because their loved one may not progress to brain death or may be medically unsuitable.

If families ask you about donation please tell them: "This may be an option for you. Let me make a phone call and I will have someone answer all your questions." Then call STA's 24-hour referral line immediately at 1-800-201-0527.



SOUTHWEST TRANSPLANT ALLIANCE
A NONPROFIT CORPORATION

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Beaumont
Corpus Christi
El Paso
Galveston
Tyler

*Giving the
gift of life*
RELIGIOUS VIEWS
ON DONATION



SOUTHWEST TRANSPLANT ALLIANCE
A NONPROFIT CORPORATION

Giving the gift of life

RELIGIOUS VIEWPOINTS

Many religions have published doctrines that encourage donation. While the words may differ, the underlying theme is the same: Organ and tissue donation represents one of the highest expressions of loving and giving, the basic principles on which all religions are based. We will honor the beliefs or religious rituals of the donor families before and after the donation.

AME & AME Zion — Donation is viewed as an act of neighborly love and charity. They encourage all members to support donation as a way of helping others.

Assembly of God — Donation is highly supported.

Baptist — In 1988, the Southern Baptist Convention passed a resolution supporting donation as a way to alleviate suffering and have compassion for the needs of others. Donation is advocated as an act of charity.

Buddhism — Donation is a matter of individual conscience and high value is placed on acts of compassion. The importance of letting a loved one know your wishes is stressed.

Catholicism — Donation is viewed as an act of charity and love. Transplants are morally and ethically acceptable to the Vatican.

Christian Science — Christian Scientists normally rely on spiritual means of healing instead on medical. They are free, however, to choose whatever form of medical treatment they desire, including a transplant. The question of donation is left to the individual church member.

Episcopal — In 1982, a resolution was passed that recognizes the life-giving benefits of blood, organ and tissue donation. All Episcopalians are encouraged to become donors.

Greek Orthodox — Donation is supported as a way to better human life through transplantation or research, leading to improvements in the treatment and prevention of disease.

Hinduism — According to H.L. Trivedi in Transplantation Proceedings, "There is nothing in the Hindu religion indicating that parts of humans cannot be used to alleviate the suffering of other humans."

Independent Conservative Evangelical — In general, Evangelicals have no opposition to donation. Each Church is autonomous and leaves the decision to donate up to the individual.

Islam — The principle of saving lives is of importance. According to A. Sachedina in Transplantation Proceedings, "The majority of the Muslim scholars belonging to various schools of Islamic law have invoked the principle of priority of saving human life and have permitted the organ transplant as a necessity to procure the noble end."

Jehovah's Witness — According to the Watch Tower Society, donation is a matter of individual decision. Members are often assumed to be against donation because of their opposition to blood transfusion. However, this means only that all blood must be removed from the organs and tissues before being transplanted.

Judaism — All four branches of Judaism support and encourage donation. Numerous resolutions have been passed encouraging donation. According to Orthodox Rabbi Moses Tendler, "If one is in the position to donate an organ to save another's life, it's obligatory to do so, even if the donor never knows who the beneficiary will be. The basic principle of Jewish ethics, 'infinite worth of the human being,' also includes donation of corneas, since eyesight restoration is considered a lifesaving operation."

Lutheran — The LCA passed a resolution in 1984 stating that donation contributes to the well-being of humanity and can be "an expression of love for a neighbor in need."

Mormon — The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints believes the decision to donate is an individual one made in conjunction with family, medical personnel and prayer. They do not oppose donation.

Seventh-Day Adventist — Donation and transplantation are strongly encouraged. Many transplant hospitals, including Loma Linda in California, are Seventh-Day Adventist.

Unitarian Universalist — Donation is widely supported and viewed as an act of love and giving.

United Methodist — A 1984 policy statement notes that the church "recognize the life-giving benefits of organ and tissue donation, and thereby encourages all Christians to become organ and tissue donors...as part of their ministry to others in the name of Christ, who gave His life that we might have life in its fullness."

