



Every person has the potential to be an organ and tissue donor.
Whole body donation may be a consideration for those interested in advancing medical knowledge.

Question: What is the difference between organ and tissue donation?

Answer: Organ donation can only occur when someone has been declared brain dead, or in some instances, after cardiac death. Donation of major organs like the heart, lungs, kidney or liver is somewhat rare because of state, federal and clinical requirements for safe and dignified surgical removal. Donation of tissue like as eyes, bone, skin, veins, heart valves, and tendons is more common because tissue removal takes place after the death of the donor.

Question: If I want to donate my organs or tissues, how do I make sure this happens?

Answer: Donation of body organs or tissue for medical purposes may be discussed and documented throughout life by any competent adult donor.

Step 1. The most important step is to share your wishes with your Health Care Agent and your family.

Step 2. In addition to communicating with your Health Care Agent, it is important to clearly document your preferences about organ/tissue and whole body donation on your Advance Directive (use the blank lines on page 2 of the Honoring Choices® Idaho Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care document).

Step 3. Make sure you register with the Idaho Donor Registry at yesidaho.org and check “yes” when registering for your drivers license or state ID card. All people who die in hospitals are screened for potential organ donation.

Question: Where can I donate my body for research?

Answer: Idaho State University accepts whole body donation for medical science. This is limited to a 250 mile radius from Pocatello (including Boise/Nampa). To learn more, visit their website: <https://isu.edu/bios/donations/anatomical-donations/>.

MEDCURE, an Oregon-based program, provides services for whole body donation for people wanting to donate their bodies to science, specifically for medical professionals engaging in anatomical study. To learn more, visit their website: medcure.org.

Question: Where can I get more information?

Answer: Decisions about organ and tissue donation are specific to you. You may want to talk with your health care providers, spiritual leaders or others who can help you make an informed decision.

For more information, please visit yesidaho.org. If you live in North Idaho, icnw.org has information specific to your area.