



# ORGAN DONATION

DECIDE. TELL. NOTE IT.

Decide for yourself and complete the organ donor card today.

Organ donor card



## ORGAN DONATION

LIVING-IS-SHARING.CH

*Expression of wishes regarding the removal of organs, tissues or cells for transplantation purposes*

## THREE GOOD REASONS TO TALK ABOUT ORGAN DONATION.

### 1. For my own sake

I decide for myself what happens to my body, during my lifetime and beyond. This includes whether or not I wish to donate organs, tissues or cells after my death should the situation arise.

### 2. For my relatives' sake

Usually the question of organ donation is sudden and unexpected. It's best if my loved ones are aware of my wishes so they can make decisions on my behalf.

### 3. For the sake of life

In Switzerland, many patients are waiting for a life-saving organ transplant. By becoming a donor, I could save lives.

## RECORD YOUR WISHES

Decide for yourself now whether you consent to the removal of organs, tissues or cells after your death. If your loved ones are not aware of your wishes, they will face the additional burden of having to make a decision about donation at an already stressful time.

Think about it, make your decision and complete the donor card at the end of this leaflet. By talking to your relatives about what you decide, you can make things easier for them.



## DONATION CAN SAVE LIVES

Organs from deceased donors can be transplanted into people who are seriously ill. For example, a liver transplant can be life-saving for someone with severe mushroom poisoning.

Tissues from deceased donors can also save lives or at least improve significantly impaired quality of life. For example, a heart valve can help a child with a heart defect, or a cornea transplant can stop someone losing their sight.

**Further information is available (in German, French and Italian) at:**

- [www.living-is-sharing.ch](http://www.living-is-sharing.ch)
- [www.bag.admin.ch/transplantation](http://www.bag.admin.ch/transplantation)
- [www.swisstransplant.org](http://www.swisstransplant.org) or from your GP.

## WHAT CAN BE DONATED AFTER DEATH?

The following organs can be donated after death: kidneys, lungs, liver, heart, pancreas (and islet cells) and small bowel.

As well as organs, tissue can also be donated, such as the corneas, heart valves and major blood vessels.

*Blood stem cells can only be donated by living donors. Transplantation of these cells is often the only hope of recovery for people with leukaemia and other blood diseases. More information: [www.blutstammzellspende.ch](http://www.blutstammzellspende.ch)*

## WHO CAN BE A DONOR?

There is no age limit for becoming an organ donor – even those aged over 80 may be able to be organ donors. Donation is in many cases also possible if you take medication or have a pre-existing condition. That's why it's always a good idea to record your wishes. You can do so from the age of 16. For under-16s, decisions on donation are made by the legal representatives.

## IN WHAT SITUATIONS?

Few people die in circumstances that allow them to become organ donors after death. Donation is only possible if the person died in hospital in an intensive care unit, for example following a brain haemorrhage, a significant head injury or a severe heart attack. People who die at home or at the scene of an accident can't become donors.

Tissue such as corneas can be removed from people who didn't die in hospital. This can be done up to 48 hours after death and the tissues can be stored for a certain time before transplantation.



Donate organs?  
**You decide.**

[LIVING-IS-SHARING.CH](http://LIVING-IS-SHARING.CH)



Lungs



Heart



Pancreas



Kidneys



Liver



Small bowel



## IF DEATH IS INEVITABLE

Despite the best efforts of healthcare professionals, not everyone in intensive care can be saved. If death is inevitable, life-sustaining treatment will have to be withdrawn to allow the patient to die. Only palliative treatment is continued until death, for example pain medication may be administered so that the person doesn't have to suffer.

The decision regarding withdrawal of life-sustaining treatment is made by doctors together with relatives. It is always made independent of any consideration of donation.

If, medically speaking, organ donation is possible, the doctors will then clarify whether this corresponds to the deceased patient's wishes.

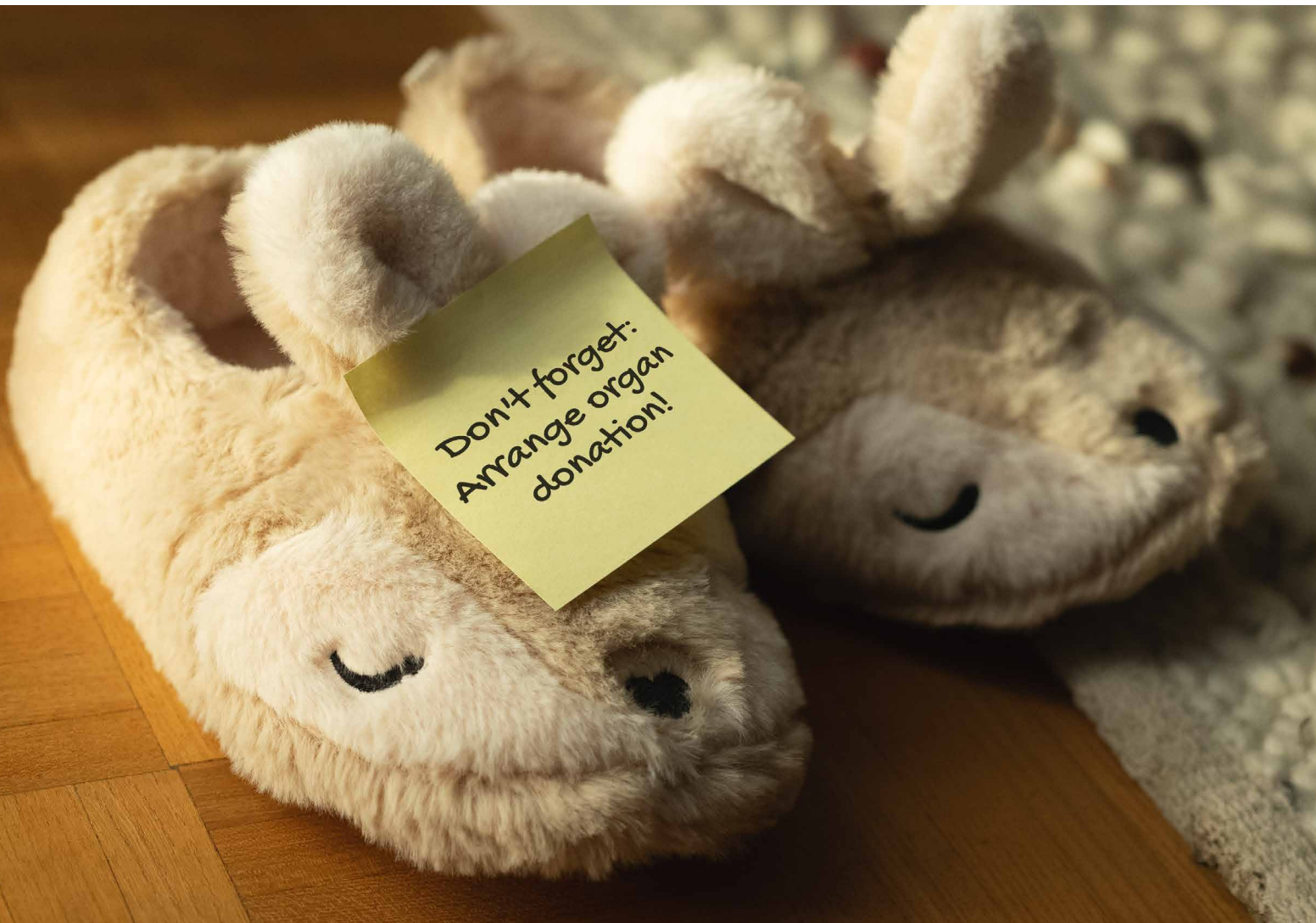
## DONATION ONLY WITH CONSENT

Organs, tissues and cells can only be removed after death if the deceased patient has given their consent. Consent is also required for the necessary preparatory medical measures (see section 'Preparatory medical measures'). The doctors will always discuss these matters with the person's relatives. The following principles apply:

- If a person has set out their wishes on a donor card or in an advance directive, they must be complied with.
- If someone has delegated the decision to a trusted person, the trusted person makes the decision instead of the family members.

→ If there is no documented consent or refusal, the next of kin will be asked whether they are aware of the person's wishes. If they're not, they will be asked to make a decision. The relatives should make a decision in line with the deceased person's presumed wishes. If no relatives can be contacted or they do not respond, the removal of organs, tissues or cells is not permitted.

The subject of organ donation should not be raised with relatives until a decision has been made to discontinue treatment and let the person die.



## PREPARING FOR DONATION

### TAKES TIME

If the person has consented to be a donor, many things need to be clarified and organised. Various medical examinations are conducted to check which organs are suitable for transplantation. Blood samples also have to be analysed in a laboratory in order to identify suitable recipients for the organs. Finally, the retrieval and transport of organs must be arranged. These preparations may take several hours. The process in the hospital therefore takes longer than if the person had opted not to be a donor.

### PROTECTING THE ORGANS FROM DAMAGE

During these preparations, efforts must be made to prevent the organs being damaged or losing their function. This is why preparatory medical measures are needed: artificial respiration is continued and the person will be given drugs to maintain circulatory function and to continue to supply the organs with oxygen.



## PREPARATORY MEDICAL

### MEASURES

Preparatory medical measures are medical procedures carried out on the donor to protect the organs. The measures are carried out before death and until the organs are removed. Depending on the situation, the following may be necessary:

- Continuation of artificial respiration.
- Administration of drugs to stabilise the circulatory function and bodily processes.
- Collection of various samples for laboratory testing to assess organ function.

These measures are of no benefit to the donor, but they are necessary to ensure that the organs can be transplanted and will subsequently work properly.

### CONSENT IS NEEDED

- Anyone who checks 'I consent' to donation must consent to both the removal of organs and the preparatory measures. The 'I consent' on the donor card therefore also applies to the preparatory medical measures.
- If there is no written expression of the donor's wishes regarding the preparatory measures, the relatives or trusted person must give their consent on behalf of the donor.

## TWO TYPES OF DONATION



**THE ORGAN DONATION PROCESS DEPENDS ON HOW DEATH OCCURS IN THE INTENSIVE CARE UNIT. THERE ARE TWO DIFFERENT PROCESSES:**

### DONATION AFTER BRAIN DEATH:

If the brain of someone on a ventilator is very severely damaged, their most important bodily functions are only maintained through ventilation and drugs. Recovery from brain death is not possible.

If organ donation is a possibility, there are many checks and preparations to be carried out. The person will

continue to be ventilated and given drugs. Otherwise, the circulation and bodily functions would rapidly fail.

If the brain no longer functions, the person dies. Death must be clearly established before organs can be removed. This type of donation after very severe brain damage is known as DBD (donation after brain death).

### DONATION AFTER CIRCULATORY DEATH:

If death is inevitable for someone who is seriously ill or severely injured and any further treatment is futile, life-sustaining treatment is withdrawn so that the person can die.

If organ donation is a possibility, checks and preparations need to be carried out for removal and transplantation of the organs. Only afterwards are the life-sustaining treatments withdrawn.

When treatment is discontinued, the heartbeat slows down until the circulation stops. An ultrasound examination must confirm this. Without circulation, the brain is no longer supplied with oxygen. It therefore stops working and the person dies. Death must be confirmed five minutes after the last heartbeat. The organs are then removed immediately. This type of donation is known as DCD (donation after circulatory death).



## DIAGNOSIS OF DEATH

Before organs can be removed from a deceased donor, the person's death must be established beyond any doubt. This requires confirmation from two appropriately qualified doctors that all functions of the brain and brain stem have irreversibly ceased (also known as diagnosis of brain death).

The doctors who diagnose death must not belong to the medical teams that carry out organ removal or transplantation.

## THE REMOVAL

Once death has been diagnosed beyond any doubt, the deceased donor is prepared for organ removal in the operating theatre. The organs are then removed in an operation lasting several hours. They are then transported as quickly as possible to the hospitals where recipients have already been prepared for transplant operations.

If the donor has also consented to the donation of tissues, these are harvested after the organs.

After removal, the doctors carefully close the incisions and place a dressing over them.

## TIME TO SAY GOODBYE

Relatives can usually stay with the donor until they are taken to the operating theatre for organ removal. Specially trained coordinators counsel the relatives and answer any questions they may have about donation and the process involved.

After removal, the deceased person's eyes are closed and the incisions are covered with clothing. The relatives can then say goodbye and organise the funeral. The relatives are not informed about who has received the organs. However, on request they can be told which organs were transplanted and how the recipients are doing.



## ORGAN DONATION

DECIDE. TELL. NOTE IT.

Decide yourself what happens to your body – throughout, and beyond, your lifetime. Write down your organ donation intentions, and inform your loved ones about them.

For your  
own sake.

## FREQUENTLY-ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1 DO YOU RECEIVE MONEY FOR BEING A DONOR?

The Transplantation Act prohibits the trade of organs, tissues and cells and stipulates that donation must be made on a non-commercial basis.

The donation of organs, tissues or cells is always voluntary and is not financially compensated. However, donation should not result in a financial disadvantage for the relatives either.

### 2 WILL EVERYTHING BE DONE TO SAVE ME IF I'VE CONSENTED TO ORGAN DONATION?

Saving lives is always the top priority of healthcare professionals. Only if death is inevitable will treatment and therapy be discontinued in consultation with your relatives. Whether or not you have consented to

organ donation has no bearing on this decision. Death must be clearly established before organs are removed.

### 3 ARE ALL ORGANS REMOVED ONCE CONSENT IS GRANTED?

Only organs that are medically suitable for transplantation and for which there are matching recipients are removed. Organs that the donor has excluded from donation will not be removed.

### 4 WHO RECEIVES THE DONATED ORGANS?

There is a waiting list of people who need an organ. The question of which person on the waiting list receives an organ is tightly regulated. Allocation is based on the following criteria: medical urgency, medical benefit and waiting time.

## POINTS TO NOTE ABOUT THE DONOR CARD

→ On the attached donor card, you can record whether or not you wish to be a donor after death. You can also decide to donate only certain organs, tissues or cells.

→ Successful transplantation is not possible without preparatory medical measures. The donor card is therefore designed so that by checking 'I consent', this applies to both removal and the preparatory measures (see section 'Preparatory medical measures').

→ Separate consent must be obtained for the removal of tissues and cells if they are to be used to manufacture products, for example to be marketed as a replacement for damaged bones.

→ Anyone aged 16 or over can complete a donor card. For younger people, decisions on donation are made by the legal representatives.

→ If the donor card is lost or cannot be located, the next of kin will be asked whether they are aware of the person's wishes. If not, the relatives will need to make a decision in line with what the person would have wanted. This is why you should always talk about your wishes with your loved ones.

→ The information on the donor card is not stored anywhere. You should therefore always carry it with you.

## YOUR OWN DONOR CARD IN JUST A FEW STEPS

1 Enter your first name, surname and date of birth in clear and legible capital letters.

2 Sign the card and enter the date.

3 Decide whether you wish to authorise, authorise in part or refuse the removal of organs, tissues or cells after your death. You can also leave this decision to a trusted person. Important: only check one of the four options!

4 Let your relatives know your wishes.

5 Always carry the completed donor card with you (e.g. in your wallet).

6 If you change your mind, simply destroy the old card, fill out a new one and let your relatives know about your decision.

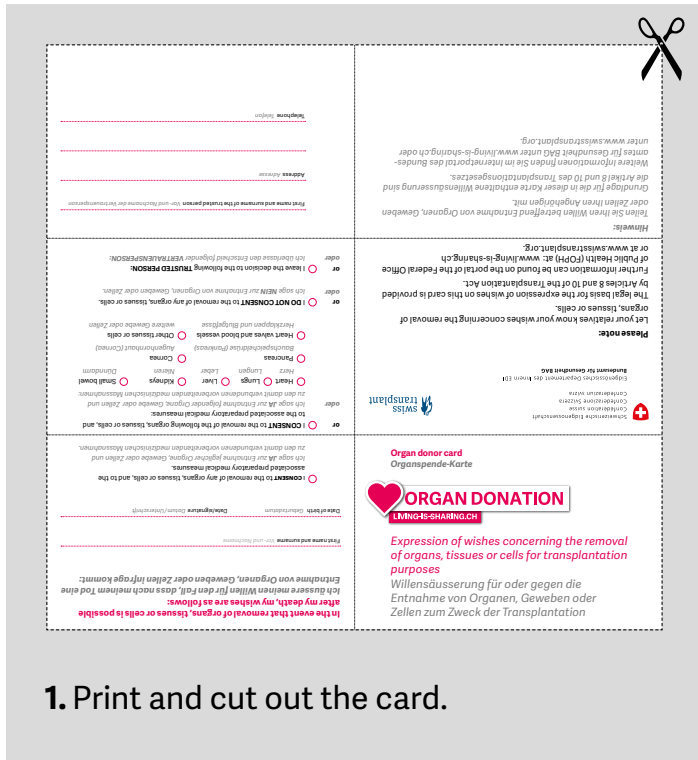


→ If you change your mind, destroy the old donor card, fill out a new one, and let your relatives and trusted person know.

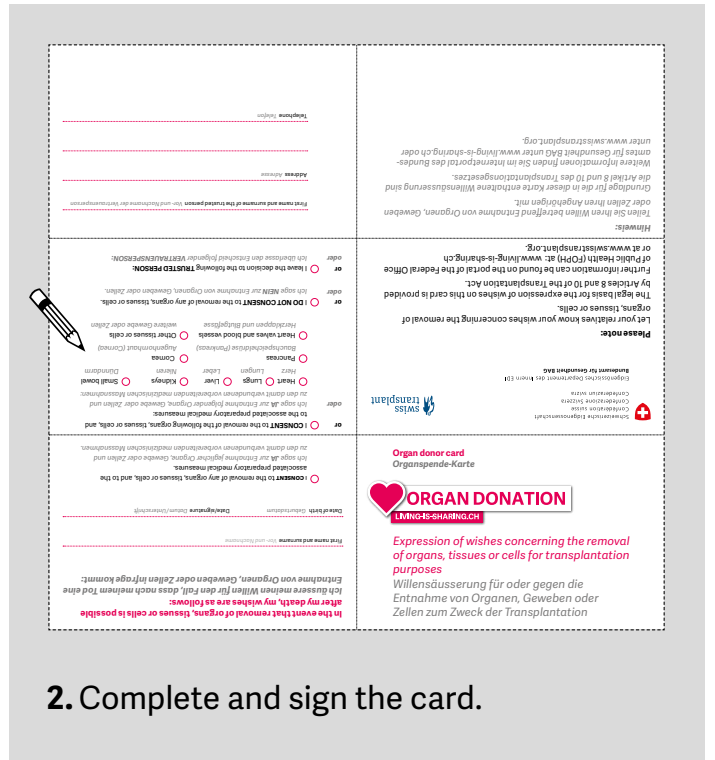
→ Donor cards issued abroad, earlier versions of the Swiss donor card, or a simple handwritten note are considered valid, provided they contain the following information alongside a clear expression of wishes: first name, surname, date of birth, date and signature.

→ When travelling abroad, the local legal regulations apply regarding the donation of organs, tissues and cells. Find out in good time before you travel.

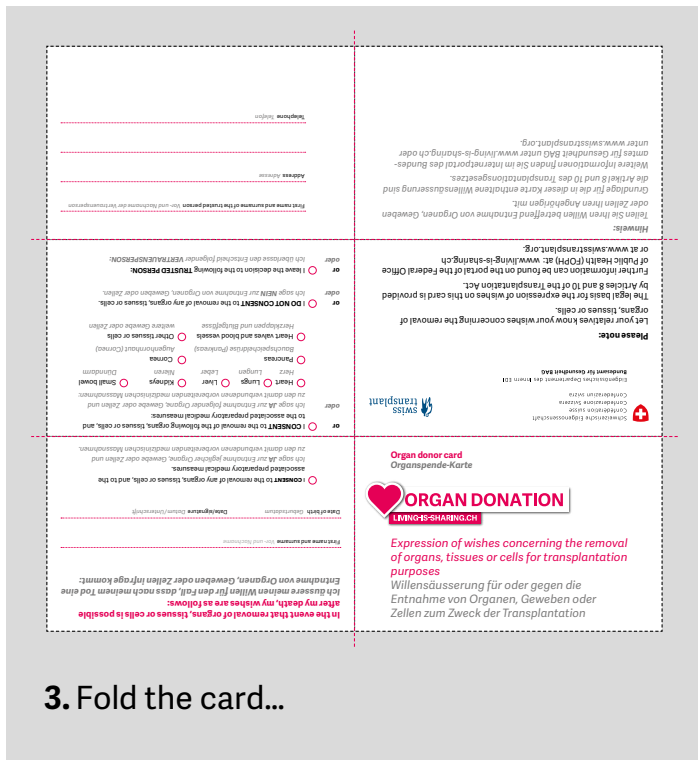
You can order free donor cards in German, French and Italian online at [www.living-is-sharing.ch](http://www.living-is-sharing.ch). The card can also be downloaded here as a PDF in Switzerland's official languages and in various other languages. You can order a donor card in German, French or Italian by phone on 058 123 80 00 or by email to [info@swisstransplant.org](mailto:info@swisstransplant.org).



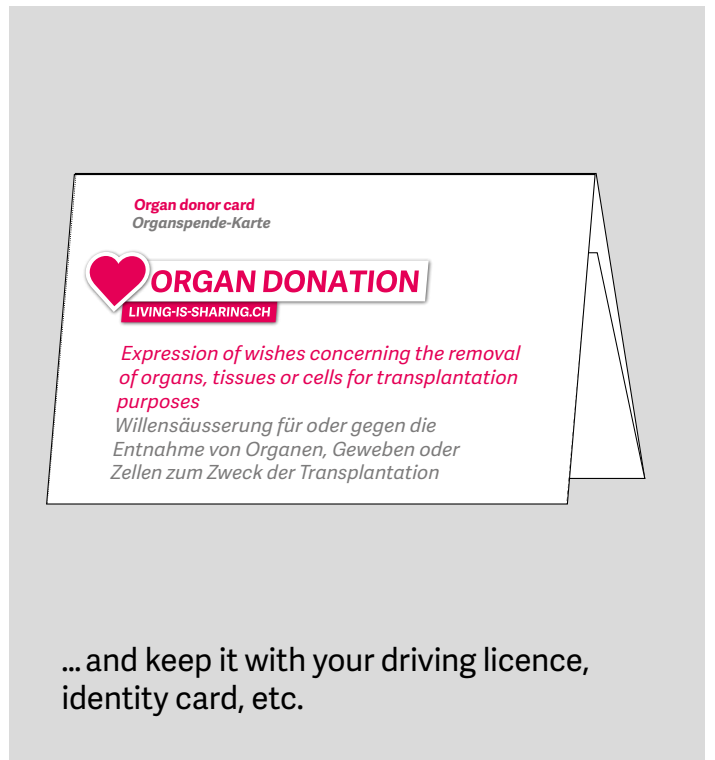
1. Print and cut out the card.



2. Complete and sign the card.



3. Fold the card...



... and keep it with your driving licence, identity card, etc.



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Eidgenössisches Departement des Innern EDI  
Bundesamt für Gesundheit BAG





<p>First name and surname of the trusted person Vor- und Nachname der Vertrauensperson</p> <p>Address Adresse</p> <p>Telephone Telefon</p>	<p><b>Hinweis:</b></p> <p>Teilen Sie Ihren Willen betreffend Entnahme von Organen, Geweben oder Zellen Ihren Angehörigen mit.</p> <p>Grundlage für die in dieser Karte enthaltene Willensäußerung sind die Artikel 8 und 10 des Transplantationsgesetzes.</p> <p>Weitere Informationen finden Sie im Internetportal des Bundesamtes für Gesundheit BAG unter <a href="http://www.living-is-sharing.ch">www.living-is-sharing.ch</a> oder unter <a href="http://www.swisstransplant.org">www.swisstransplant.org</a>.</p>
<p><input type="radio"/> I <b>DO NOT CONSENT</b> to the removal of any organs, tissues or cells.</p> <p>Ich sage <b>NEIN</b> zur Entnahme von Organen, Geweben oder Zellen.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> I <b>leave the decision to the following TRUSTED PERSON:</b></p> <p>Ich überlasse den Entscheid folgender <b>VERTRAUENSPERSON:</b></p> <p>oder</p> <p><input type="radio"/> I <b>CONSENT</b> to the removal of the following organs, tissues or cells, and to the associated preparatory medical measures.</p> <p>Ich sage <b>JA</b> zur Entnahme folgender Organe, Gewebe oder Zellen und zu den damit verbundenen vorbereitenden medizinischen Massnahmen.</p> <p>oder</p> <p><input type="radio"/> I <b>CONSENT</b> to the removal of the following organs, tissues or cells, and to the associated preparatory medical measures.</p> <p>Ich sage <b>JA</b> zur Entnahme jeglicher Organe, Gewebe oder Zellen und zu den damit verbundenen vorbereitenden medizinischen Massnahmen.</p>	<p><b>Please note:</b></p> <p>Let your relatives know your wishes concerning the removal of organs, tissues or cells.</p> <p>The legal basis for the expression of wishes on this card is provided by Articles 8 and 10 of the Transplantation Act.</p> <p>Further information can be found on the portal of the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) at: <a href="http://www.living-is-sharing.ch">www.living-is-sharing.ch</a> or at <a href="http://www.swisstansplant.org">www.swisstansplant.org</a>.</p> <p>Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft Confédération suisse Confederazione Svizzera Confederaziun svizra Eidgenössisches Departement des Innern EDI Bundesamt für Gesundheit BAG</p> <p></p>
<p>Date of birth Geburtsdatum</p> <p>Date/signature Datum/Unterschrift</p> <p>First name and surname Vor- und Nachname</p> <p><b>In the event that removal of organs, tissues or cells is possible after my death, my wishes are as follows:</b></p> <p><b>Ich äusserere meinen Willen für den Fall, dass nach meinem Tod eine Entnahme von Organen, Geweben oder Zellen infrage kommt:</b></p>	<p><b>Organ donor card</b> <b>Organspende-Karte</b></p> <p> <b>ORGAN DONATION</b> <b>LIVING-IS-SHARING.CH</b></p> <p><i>Expression of wishes concerning the removal of organs, tissues or cells for transplantation purposes</i></p> <p><i>Willensäußerung für oder gegen die Entnahme von Organen, Geweben oder Zellen zum Zweck der Transplantation</i></p>



**In the event that removal of organs, tissues or cells is possible after my death, my wishes are as follows:**

Ich äusserere meinen Willen für den Fall, dass nach meinem Tod eine Entnahme von Organen, Geweben oder Zellen in Frage kommt:

First name and surname Vor- und Nachname

Date of birth Geburtsdatum

Date/signature Datum/Unterschrift

I consent to the removal of any organs, tissues or cells, and to the associated preparatory medical measures.

Ich sage Ja zur Entnahme jeglicher Organe, Gewebe oder Zellen und zugehörigen vorbereitenden medizinischen Massnahmen.

I consent to the removal of the following organs, tissues or cells, and to the associated preparatory medical measures:

Ich sage Ja zur Entnahme folgender Organe, Gewebe oder Zellen und zugehörigen vorbereitenden medizinischen Massnahmen:

Heart  Lungs  Liver  Kidneys  Small bowel  Herz  Lungen  Leber  Nieren  Dünndarm

Pancreas  Cornea  Bauchspeicheldrüse (Pankreas)  Augenhornhaut (Cornea)

Heart valves and blood vessels  Other tissues or cells  Herzklappen und Blutgefässe  weitere Gewebe oder Zellen

I DO NOT CONSENT to the removal of any organs, tissues or cells.

Ich sage NEIN zur Entnahme von Organen, Geweben oder Zellen.

I leave the decision to the following TRUSTED PERSON:

Ich überlasse den Entscheid folgender VERTRAUENSPERSON:

FOR YOUR LOVED ONES - DUPLICATE

First name and surname of the trusted person Vor- und Nachname der Vertrauensperson

Address Adresse

Telephone Telefon

**Organ donor card**  
Organspende-Karte

**ORGAN DONATION**  
LIVING-IS-SHARING.CH

Expression of wishes concerning the removal of organs, tissues or cells for transplantation purposes

Willensäusserung für oder gegen die Entnahme von Organen, Geweben oder Zellen zum Zweck der Transplantation

**DUPLICATE**  
FOR YOUR LOVED ONES

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Eidgenössisches Departement des Innern EDI  
Bundesamt für Gesundheit BAG

swiss transplant

Let your relatives know your wishes concerning the removal of organs, tissues or cells.

The legal basis for the expression of wishes on this card is provided by Articles 8 and 10 of the Transplantation Act.

Further information can be found on the portal of the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) at: [www.living-is-sharing.ch](http://www.living-is-sharing.ch)

or at [www.swisstransplant.org](http://www.swisstransplant.org)

**Hinweis:**

Teilen Sie Ihren Willen betreffend Entnahme von Organen, Geweben oder Zellen Ihren Angehörigen mit.

Grundlage für die in dieser Karte enthaltene Willensäusserung sind die Artikel 8 und 10 des Transplantationsgesetzes.

Weitere Informationen finden Sie im Internetportal des Bundesamtes für Gesundheit BAG unter [www.living-is-sharing.ch](http://www.living-is-sharing.ch) oder unter [www.swisstransplant.org](http://www.swisstransplant.org).