



minority organ tissue transplant education program

NATIONAL MINORITY DONOR AWARENESS WEEK STATEMENT (2019)

National Minority Donor Awareness Week (August 1-7) is a special observance designed to heighten awareness about the need to increase donation participation among all ethnic minority populations. While there are more than 113,000 persons on the national transplant waiting list, 60% of those waiting represent ethnic minorities. Each year various activities are conducted across the country that include transplant recipients, living donors and donor family members.

This year (2019), the key focus is on **living donation**. This is due to the fact that living donation rates among African Americans and Hispanics/Latinos have decreased by 3-5%.

At least 18 persons die daily awaiting a transplant due to the donor shortage, therefore, National Minority Donor Awareness Week is another important effort to promote the positive messages that are necessary for the minority community to become organ and tissue donors.

This special observance began in 1996 as National Minority Donor Awareness Day when there were 46,000 persons on the national waiting list. It was changed to National Minority Donor Awareness Week in 2017 to provide additional time to participate in more activities especially focused on minority populations. The waiting list currently stands at more than 113,000 with more than 60% representing ethnic minorities.

The number one problem in transplantation has always been and still remains today - the shortage of donors. Minorities wait twice as long for transplants and they continue to have a disproportionately higher incidence of diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease, all of which lead to organ failure, especially kidney failure.

The continuous support of the OPO'S and other organizations is extremely necessary as minority donation rates doubled from 15% to 31%. As of 2017, African Americans was the ethnic group (since 2010) with the highest number of Organ Donors per Million (O.D.M.) in America. Our future goal is **35%**.

What is the REQUIRED ACTION in order to meet this goal? All ethnic groups should:

- 1-register to become an organ/tissue donor;
- 2-register to become an organ donor;
- 3-have a family discussion, share your desire to become an organ /tissue donor in life or after death and encourage them to do so as well;
- 4-Open doors to your church, social or community group so that we can discuss how to live healthier lives and how we can help others by the donation of organs and or tissues in life and after death.

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