



# The Gift of Life

## Leave Them Certain

Organ Donation after Death for  
Hindu Communities in England



---

## What is organ donation?

- Organ donation is the giving of an organ to someone who needs it, to save or transform their life.
- There are two ways of donating an organ: a living donation or a donation after death.
- Donation after death means that one person who has died (donor) can help up to 9 people in need (recipients) by donating their organs.

---

## Why is organ donation important for Hindus?

- 17% of those waiting for an organ are Asian but only 3% of those on the donor register are Asian.
- We know that organs from the same ethnic group are much more likely to be a match for the recipient.
- Waiting times for Asians are longer than for white people because of a shortage of donors from the Asian community.

---

## What is the Opt-Out Policy for organ donation?

- The law changed in 2020 to help save and improve more lives.
- From Spring 2020, all adults in England are considered to have agreed to be an organ donor when they die, unless they record a decision *not* to donate, or are in one of the excluded groups.

This law applies to adults living in England and who die in England. It does NOT apply to:

- People under 18
- People who lack the mental capacity to understand the new arrangements and take the necessary action
- People who have lived in England for less than 12 months before their death
- People who are not living here voluntarily

- This is called an 'opt-out' system.
- Organ donation is still a gift. You still have the right to choose whether or not to be an organ donor.
- The family of a potential donor is always approached to discuss the option of organ donation.
- Any questions your family might have about the organ donation process will be addressed, including how your faith, beliefs or culture will be respected.
- **IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU TELL YOUR FAMILY ABOUT YOUR DONATION DECISION SO THEY CAN SUPPORT WHAT YOU WANT.**
- When you have made your decision, it's important to record it on the NHS Organ Donor Register. You can also download and share a faith-specific organ donor card.



- Remember that if you don't record a decision and are covered by the 'opt-out' law, it will be considered that you agree to be an organ donor.
- It is important to remember that all healthcare professionals will **always act to save your life first.**

---

## What does Hinduism say?

Two of Hinduism's key principles, daan and seva, support organ donation.

Sanskrit meanings:

**DAAN** – selfless giving | **SEVA** – selfless service



*To donate an organ is truly a selfless act of 'seva' and is something that every person who is able to, should think about.*

**HH Mahant Swami Maharaj**

Spiritual Head of BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha



*Death is certain but the simplest way to extend life beyond death is through donating body parts.*

**Dwarkeshlalji 108 Kadi-Amdavad**

Spiritual Head of Shrinathdham Haveli, Harrow



*According to Sanatan Vedic Dharma, every person should support organ donation because many lives can be saved.*

**Pujya Devprasad Bapushree**



*The best daan you can give is the daan of the body. Be selfless.*

**Nila Madhav Das**

Minister of Religion, Hare Krishna Temple, Watford



*Daan is an act of selfless giving which is an integral part of our religion. Our religion has no barriers to Ang Daan (organ donation).*

**Mahendrabhai Pandya**

Head Priest of Jalaram Temple, Leicester

---

## Important questions asked by Hindus:

### ■ Does the process of organ donation interfere with reincarnation?

No. This is because the soul leaves the body immediately following death. Hindus believe that, upon death, the soul is no longer associated with the body, which will be cremated.

### ■ Will it be possible to arrange full funeral arrangements after donation?

Yes. The specialist organ retrieval surgeons take great care in removing organs and ensuring that the body is ready for funeral arrangements. As the organ donation and subsequent transplantation are time-sensitive, this means there will not be any delay in allowing the funeral arrangements.

---

## Experiences of donation after death from Hindu families

*Aari sadly died in 2016 when he was three. Aari's parents made the decision to donate his organs, which saved the lives of two children. "If Aari couldn't be helped any further, we felt strongly that we wanted Aari to help others. We did not want another family to suffer losing their loved ones. Too many people say no to donation because they think their faith prevents it."*

**Jay and Sina**, Aari's parents



*I was diagnosed with liver cirrhosis in April 2008, being told only 20% of my liver was functioning and given three months to live. I was very fortunate to have received a donor within a short period of time but if I hadn't, I would not be here today.*

**Jayantibhai Taylor**, Recipient

*My kidney failure has taken all my energy, meaning I am no longer able to work or perform my home activities. The law change means I have increased hope of receiving a kidney transplant and will mean we all get a chance of a gift of life.*

**Jyotiben Jadav,**

A patient waiting for a transplant



---

## I see, but what can I do?

- Register your decision about organ donation.
- Talk to your family and friends about your decision to donate.
- Have the conversation. **Leave them certain.**
- If you would like to learn more or register to become an organ donor visit **[bit.ly/NHSorgandonation](https://bit.ly/NHSorgandonation)**.
- View a series of short educational videos on organ donation at **[bit.ly/OrganDonationVideos](https://bit.ly/OrganDonationVideos)**.



---

## How can the Jain and Hindu Organ Donation Group (JHOD) help?

JHOD is a national group of volunteers who are leading on informing the Jain and Hindu communities about organ donation. We are very happy to support community groups in organising local events.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact any of the following for help and support:

- [organdonation@uk.baps.org](mailto:organdonation@uk.baps.org)
- [infojhod@gmail.com](mailto:infojhod@gmail.com)

Created by volunteers from

