

Registering to Be a Donor:

A Guide for Australian Families

Organ and tissue donation is a life-changing act of kindness that can help save and improve lives. As parents, you have the opportunity to teach your children about this important decision and the impact it can have on others. This guide will walk you through how to register as an organ and tissue donor in Australia, provide tips for having the conversation with your family, and answer common questions.

Why Register as a Donor?

By registering as a donor, you are making a decision that can save up to seven lives and improve the lives of many others. Here's how:

- **Organ donation** can save lives. For example, a heart transplant can give someone with heart failure the chance to live many more years.
- **Tissue donation** can help people lead a better life. For instance, corneal transplants can restore sight, and skin grafts can aid burn victims in their recovery.

It's important to remember: Registering ensures your wishes are known, but it's equally important to have a conversation with your family to make sure they can honour your decision when the time comes. This discussion can give your loved ones confidence and comfort in a difficult moment. And the best part? You can register at any age in Australia, as long as you're over 16.

How to Register

Step 1

Visit the DonateLife Website

Go to the official DonateLife website at www.donatelife.gov.au/register-donor-today.

Step 2

Use Your Medicare Details

You'll need your Medicare card details to complete the registration. This ensures your information is securely linked to your healthcare records.

Step 3

Complete the Form

Fill out the form by:

- Choosing which organs and tissues you're willing to donate (you can select all if you're unsure).
- Providing your contact details.

Confirming your consent.

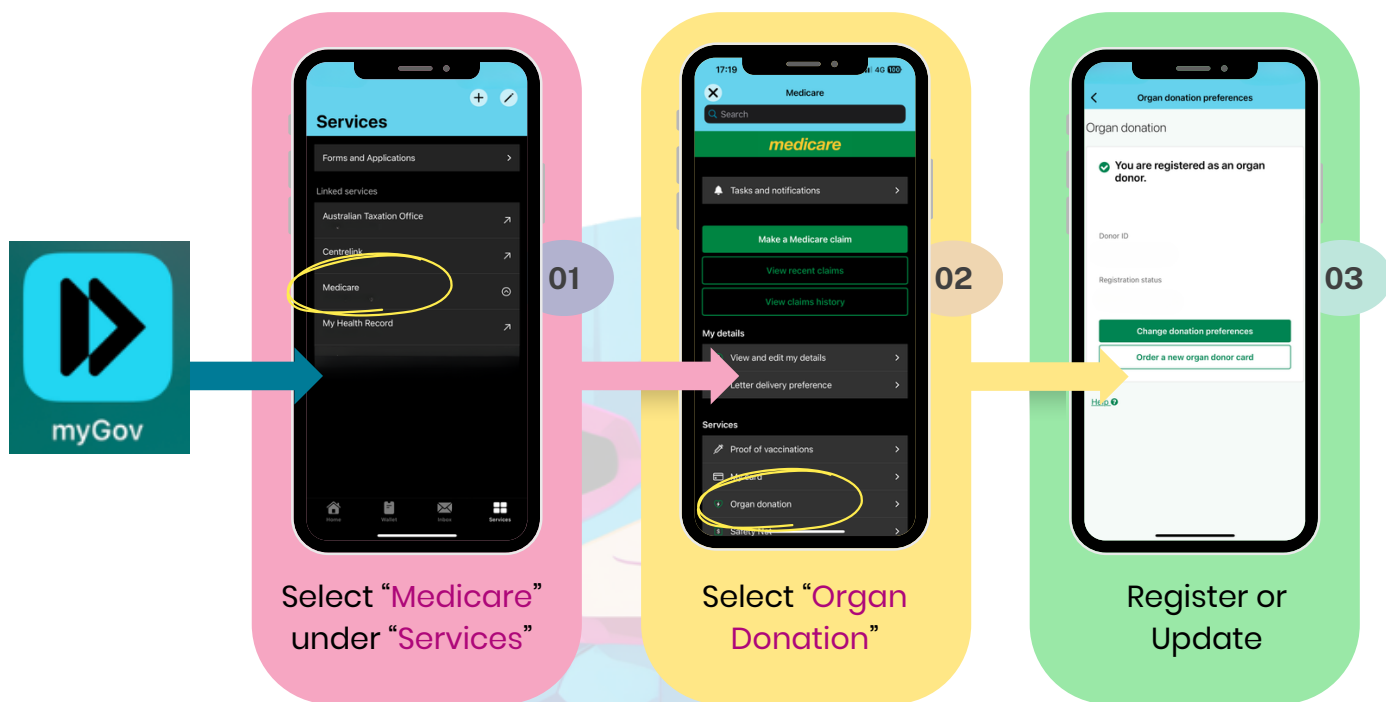


Once you've registered, you'll get a confirmation email, so you know your decision is recorded.

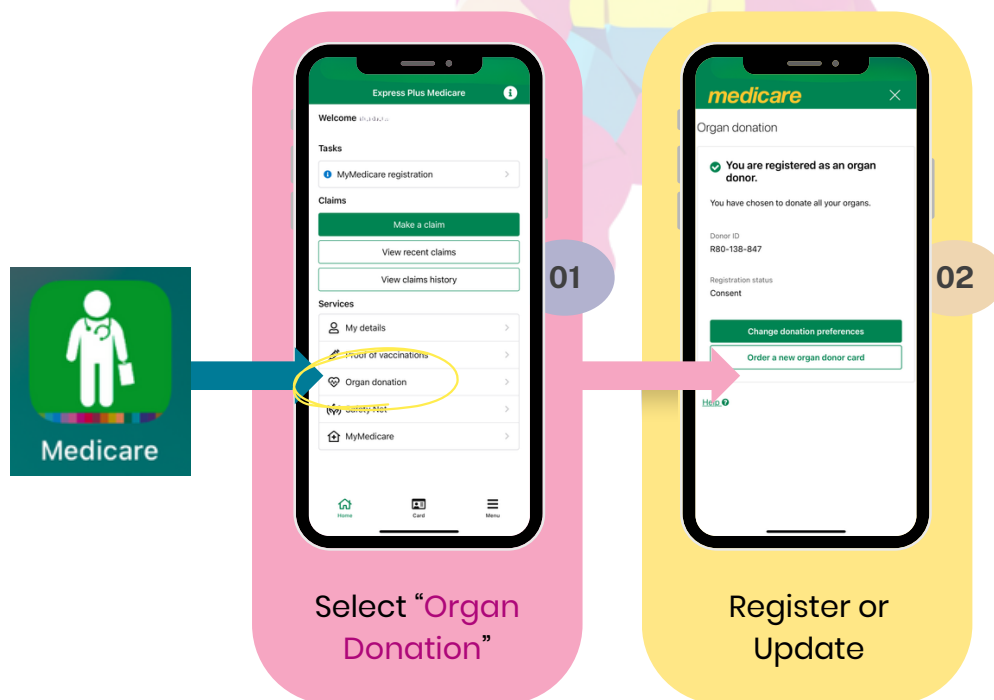
Alternative Methods

If you prefer not to register online, here are other ways:

- Use the **MyGov portal** to access the Australian Organ Donor Register (AODR).



- Use the Medicare portal to access the Australian Organ Donor Register (AODR).



- For residents of Queensland and South Australia, you can now register as an organ donor when renewing or applying for a new driver's license through the Department of Transport.
- Complete a paper form available at Medicare or healthcare providers.
- Call Medicare at 1800 777 203 for help.

Talking to Your Family About Organ and Tissue Donation

Once you've registered, it's important to talk to your family about your decision. Families will always be consulted before organ donation can happen, and knowing your wishes can bring them comfort.

Here are some tips to help you have this important conversation with your family:

- **Start by explaining why you registered:** Share why you chose to become a donor and how it feels to know you could help others, even after you're gone. For example, you could say, "I want to make a difference by helping people who need organs and tissues to live a healthier life."
- **Tie it to shared values:** Many people choose to register because donation aligns with values like kindness, generosity, and helping others. For instance, you might say, "It's a way for me to give back and do something good in the world."
- **Reassure them that it won't affect your care:** Some may be concerned that registration could affect their care during their life. You can reassure them: "Doctors will always do everything possible to save my life, no matter what my decision is about organ donation."

FAQs About Registering as a Donor

- **Do I need to renew my registration?** Once registered, your decision is valid for life unless you choose to change it. You can update your preferences anytime by visiting the DonateLife website.
 - **Scenario 1:** Sarah registered as an organ donor when she turned 18, but she's now 35 and wondering if she needs to renew her registration. The good news is that Sarah's decision remains valid for life unless she chooses to change it. She can update her preferences anytime by visiting the DonateLife website.
 - **Scenario 2:** Tom registered as a donor after he turned 16. Ten years later, he decided to update his preferences and select a few more organs to donate. He simply visited the DonateLife website, updated his choices, and was all set.
 - **Scenario 3:** Rachel registered as an organ donor when she turned 18, but after a few years, she decided that she no longer wanted to be a registered donor. Instead, she goes online to the DonateLife website, where she can easily update her preferences and opt out of the organ donation register. Her decision is updated immediately, and she receives a confirmation email to let her know that her changes have been processed.



- **Can children register as donors?** Children under 16 cannot register as donors. However, parents or guardians can decide on their behalf in certain circumstances, such as if a child is seriously ill. It's always best to discuss organ and tissue donation with the family including the child to ensure everyone is on the same page and can honour each individual's decision.
 - **Scenario 1:** Olivia's son, Ethan, is only 10, and she wants to ensure his wishes are considered if something were to happen. Since Ethan can't register himself, Olivia knows she can decide on his behalf in the unlikely event that he needs an organ donation.
 - **Scenario 2:** David's daughter, Lily, has a serious medical condition that might require organ donation in the future. David registers as her donor advocate, knowing that if the situation arises, he can decide on her behalf, as she's too young to register herself.
 - **Scenario 3:** Ben has a 16-year-old son, Sam, who has recently shown an interest in organ donation. Since Sam is just under the age of 16, Ben explains that Sam can't register as a donor yet but can make the decision when he turns 16.
 - **Scenario 4:** Emma is the guardian of her niece, Sophie, who is only 5 years old. Sophie will need a kidney transplant, so Emma knows that, as Sophie's legal guardian, she can make decisions regarding organ donation on her behalf.
- **Will my age or health stop me from donating?** No, age and health don't disqualify you from being a donor. Doctors determine donation suitability at the time of donation.
 - **Scenario 1:** Grace, who is 70 years old, is concerned that her age might prevent her from being a donor. She is reassured that age doesn't disqualify her. If she were to pass away, doctors would assess the suitability of her organs at the time of donation.
 - **Scenario 2:** Tom has a history of high blood pressure and worries it might stop him from being a donor. After learning that health conditions don't automatically disqualify people from donating, he feels more at ease knowing that doctors will determine suitability on a case-by-case basis.
 - **Scenario 3:** John is a healthy 55-year-old but wonders if his history of asthma will prevent him from donating organs. He learns that while health is considered, it's ultimately up to the doctors to evaluate the condition of his organs at the time of donation.
 - **Scenario 4:** Lucy is 85 and has diabetes. She wonders if her health condition might affect her ability to donate. She is reassured that despite her age and condition, donation eligibility is determined by doctors after her passing, who will assess her organs for suitability.

Making a Difference Together

By registering as an organ and tissue donor, you are joining a movement of people making a powerful impact. This is an opportunity to teach your children about kindness, empathy, and the importance of helping others. Encourage your family to have open conversations about donation and make sure everyone understands that their decision can bring hope to others. For more information and resources, visit the official DonateLife website: www.donatelife.gov.au.

