



## Organ Donation in India

**For Prelims:** [Transplantation of Human Organs Act, 1994](#), [National Organ Transplantation Guidelines](#), Organ Donation

**For Mains:** Need for Promoting Organ Donations

**Source:** TH

### Why in News?

Recently, the **critical shortage of organ donations**, particularly **deceased donations**, has led to a dire situation in India, with thousands of patients waiting for transplants and a significant number losing their lives daily.

- The **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** has earlier modified [National Organ Transplantation Guidelines](#), allowing those above **65 years of age to receive an organ** for transplantation from deceased donors.
- In India, [the Transplantation of Human Organs Act, 1994](#) provides various regulations for the removal of human organs and their storage. It also regulates the transplantation of human organs for therapeutic **purposes and for the prevention of commercial dealings in human organs.**

### What is the Status of Organ Donation in India?

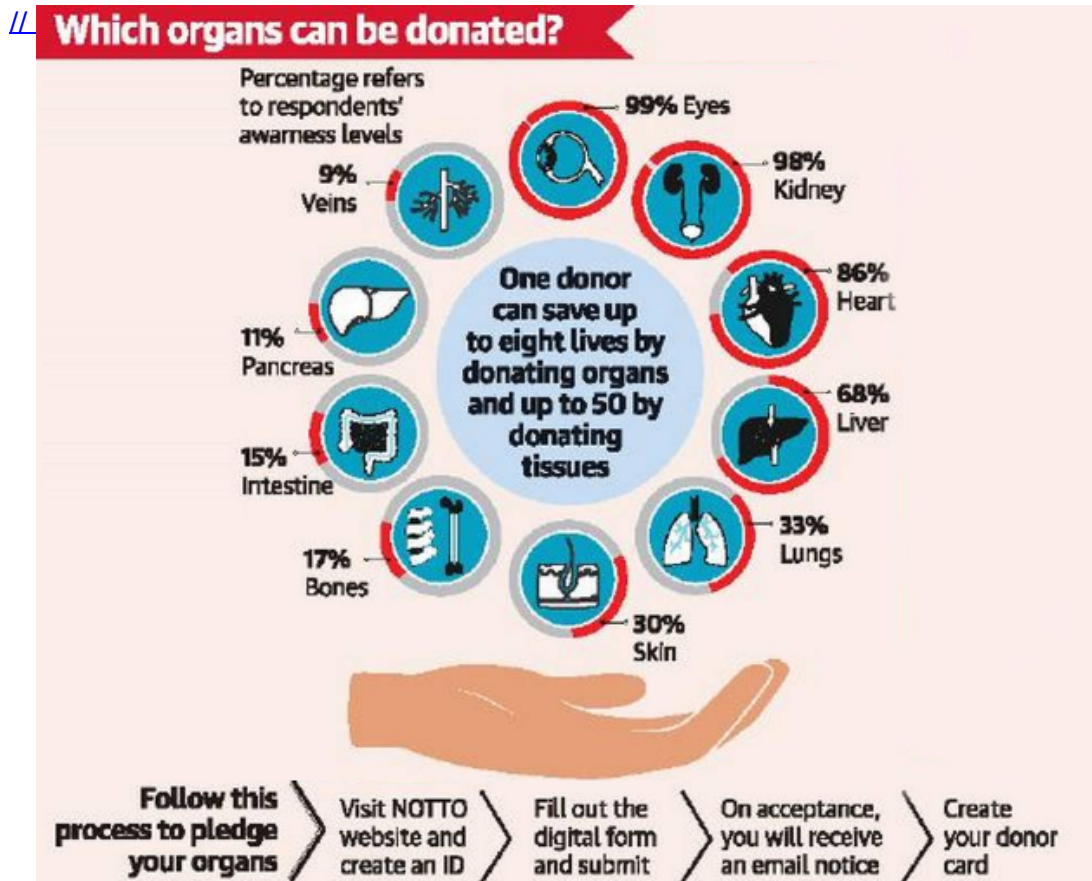
- **Growing Demand and Persistent Shortage:**
  - Over **300,000 patients are on the waiting list for organ donations in India.**
  - The supply of organ donors has not kept up with the increasing demand.
  - Approximately **20 individuals die daily while awaiting organ transplants** due to the shortage.
- **Slow Growth in Donor Numbers:**
  - Donor numbers, including **both living and deceased**, have shown **slow growth over the years.**
  - From **6,916 donors in 2014**, the count increased to about **16,041 in 2022**, indicating a modest rise.
  - The **deceased organ donation rate** in India has remained **consistently below one donor per million population for a decade.**
- **Deceased Organ Donation Rate:**
  - Urgent efforts are required to raise the deceased organ donation rate to address the shortage.
  - Countries like **Spain and the United States have achieved significantly higher donation rates, ranging from 30 to 50 donors per million population.**
- **Prevalence of Living Donors:**
  - Living donors constitute the majority, **accounting for 85% of all donors in India.**
    - However, deceased organ donations, especially for **kidneys, liver, and heart**, remain **considerably low.**

### ▪ Regional Disparities:

- Disparities in organ donation rates exist among different states in India.
  - **Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Gujarat, and Maharashtra have reported the highest number of deceased organ donors.**
  - Delhi-NCR, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Maharashtra, and West Bengal are prominent regions with a high number of living donors.

### ▪ Kidney Transplants:

- Kidney transplantation in India faces a significant disparity between demand and supply.
- Annual demand for **200,000 kidney transplants is met with only around 10,000 transplants each year**, creating a substantial gap.



## What are the Challenges Regarding Organ Donation?

### ▪ Lack of Awareness and Education:

- Limited awareness among the **general public about organ donation** and its impact.
- Insufficient education among medical professionals to **identify potential donors and counsel families effectively.**

### ▪ Family Consent and Decision-Making:

- Family **reluctance to give consent for organ donation, even when the deceased individual had expressed a willingness to donate.**
- **Emotional and ethical dilemmas** that families face when making decisions about organ donation.

### ▪ Organ Trafficking and Black Market:

- Illegal **organ trafficking and the existence of a black market for organs.**
- Criminal activities exploiting the demand for organs and undermining legitimate donation processes.

### ▪ Medical Eligibility and Compatibility:

- Matching **suitable donors and recipients based on medical compatibility** and organ availability.
- Limited availability of compatible organs, leading to prolonged waiting periods for patients.

- **Donor Incentives and Compensation:**
  - Debates over the [ethical implications](#) of offering financial incentives or compensation to organ donors.
  - Balancing the need for increasing donation rates with ensuring ethical practices.
- **Infrastructure and Logistics:**
  - Inadequate **infrastructure and resources for organ retrieval, preservation, and transplantation.**
  - Challenges in the timely transportation of organs from donors to recipients, especially across different regions.

## What are the Highlights of the New National Organ Transplantation Guidelines?

- **Removed Age Cap:**
  - Age limit for organ recipients eliminated due to improved life expectancy.
  - **NOTTO (National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organization)** guidelines previously prohibited end-stage organ failure **patients above 65 years from registering for organ transplants.**
- **No Domicile Requirement:**
  - Domicile requirement waived for organ recipient registration.
  - **'One Nation, One Policy'** approach allows patients to register for organ transplants in any state.
- **No Registration Fees:**
  - Removal of registration fees for organ recipient registration.
  - States, including Gujarat, Telangana, Maharashtra, and Kerala, no longer charge fees for patient registration.

### Note:

- NOTTO is set up under the **Directorate General of Health Services**, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, located in New Delhi.
- National Network division of NOTTO functions as the apex centre for all Indian activities for procurement, distribution and registry of organs and tissues donation and transplantation in the country.

### Way Forward

- Partner with **artists, influencers, and celebrities** to create **impactful campaigns** highlighting organ donation's significance.
- Organize seminars for medical professionals, employing **interactive simulations and case studies for donor identification and family counseling.**
- Collaborate with educational institutions to **raise awareness among students** about organ donation through workshops and talks.
- Host **community-driven events** that showcase the **success stories of organ recipients and donors.**
- Engage **religious leaders to debunk myths and misconceptions about organ donation**, emphasizing its compassionate aspect.
- Introduce a program to honour donors and their families, recognizing their selfless **contribution through plaques and certificates.**
- Foster collaborations between healthcare institutions to optimize organ transplantation processes for efficient outcomes.
- Promote the **idea of organ donation as a selfless act of compassion and empathy.**

