

Fact sheet

It's all in the mix

- To meet the needs of everyone living in the UK, we need people from all backgrounds and walks of life to become donors. However, some communities do have concerns about giving or receiving donations.

Religious belief

- Deciding whether to become a donor is a very personal thing and a decision that only you can make.
- All the major religions in the UK support the principles of blood, bone marrow and organ transplantation. These include Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.
- All accept that organ donation is a matter of individual choice.
- If you have any doubts you should discuss them with your spiritual or religious leader.

Ethnic background

- More donors are needed from the Afro Caribbean and Asian communities. This is because:
 - Some blood and Human Leukocyte Antigen (HLA) types are more common among some ethnic communities.
 - Some ethnic groups are more likely to develop particular medical conditions that require donations of blood, organs, tissue or bone marrow.
- This means a patient needing blood or bone marrow is more likely to find a match from someone with a similar ethnic background.
- Successful organ transplants are often carried out between people from different ethnic groups, but a few people with rare HLA types may only be able to receive a well-matched organ from someone of the same ethnic origin, so it's important that people from all ethnic backgrounds register to donate organs.
- People from South Asian, African and African Caribbean communities in the UK are three times more likely to need a kidney transplant than white people. This is because they are more likely to develop diabetes or high blood pressure which can lead to kidney failure.
- As a result, black and Asian people have to wait on average about twice as long as a white person for a kidney transplant.