



## Student card



# Tissue donation means sportsman can play again

**What's the difference between living, and loving life?**

**Answer: a donated tendon, if you happen to be mad about sport.**

Chris, a very keen sportsman, collided with a tree while snowboarding. The ligaments in his left knee were severely torn and he needed surgery to repair the damage. His surgeon used a donated tendon to replace the ligament, so he could return to his beloved sports as soon as possible. Within six months, Chris was back playing tennis and he was snowboarding the following year.

|| I know that the transplant was not life-saving, but my sport means a great deal to me. It is the difference between living, and loving life. My knee feels stronger today than before the accident and I am lucky to have been given the opportunity to have this surgery. ||



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**NHS**  
**Blood and Transplant**



## Fact file

- 1 Tendons are fibrous cords that link muscle to bone.
- 2 Over one million people in the UK suffer from tendon problems, which cause severe pain, stiffness and weakness.
- 3 Some people's symptoms develop gradually, with the condition of a tendon slowly deteriorating. Other people suddenly find themselves in agonising pain when a tendon tears.

### Live debates

Choose one or more of the following statements to debate as a group. Write the arguments for and against the statements and decide which side you are on. Do all the members of your group agree?

- "I think it's unfair to allow transplants for non-life-threatening problems such as torn ligaments."
- "It's not just about staying alive; it's also about being able to enjoy life and do the things you want to do. Everyone has the right to be given a transplant if it improves the quality of their lives."
- "I'm too young to be thinking about death and organ or tissue donation. I just want to get on with my own life."

### Getting into their shoes

- Imagine that Chris went on to become the world snow-boarding champion. What might he say about his tendon transplant in a newspaper interview?
- Although the vast majority of people support organ and tissue donation, only two out of ten have put their names on the list. Imagine you support the idea – explain to a mother whose child died waiting for a suitable match why you haven't signed up yet.
- With a partner, consider this statement:  
"I don't want to be cut up when I'm dead, especially not just so someone can keep doing a sport."  
How might Chris's surgeon respond to this comment?