

Did you know?

- The cornea is the clear tissue at the front of your eye that lets light in so you can see.
- Almost anyone can donate their corneas. Age, poor eyesight or medical conditions, including cancer, are not necessarily a barrier to donation.
- Eye donation can help restore sight to people with cornea problems. This may be as a result of damage caused by eye disease or injury, or defects from birth. The white part of the eye (the sclera) can be used in operations to rebuild the eye.
- During donation the whole eye is retrieved so that the cornea and sclera can both be used.
- The eye is never transplanted whole.
- Eye donation does not affect how a donor looks following donation.
- Eye donation can only take place up to 24 hours after death.
- One eye donor could save or improve the sight of up to 10 people.

Register and share your decision

If you would like to be able to give someone the gift of sight after you die, please register your decision at **organdonation.nhs.uk**, on the **NHS App** or by calling **0300 123 23 23**.

Tell your closest family or friends about your decision so that they know to support it, as well as the hospice or hospital staff looking after you.

If you are a healthcare worker, or family or close friend of someone who has died within the last 24 hours, and you wish to refer them as an eye donor please call the **National Helpline on 0800 432 0559**

For more information on cornea donation visit **organdonation.nhs.uk** or call **0300 123 23 23**



@nhsorgandonor



NHS

Blood and Transplant

The amazing gift of sight



Laura has had cornea transplants in both of her eyes; "I feel forever grateful to my donors and their families. I can now see my son's lovely little face!"

 **Yes I donate**
ORGAN DONATION

Donating your corneas can help people to see again

If you would like to be able to give someone the gift of sight after you die, please ensure that you register your donation decision and tell your closest family. Families are much more likely to support donation going ahead if they know what their loved one wanted.

If you are currently being cared for within a hospice or hospital setting, please also share your decision with the healthcare professional looking after you.

The donation

To explore the possibility of donation, a healthcare professional or family or close friend will need to call our National Referral Centre as soon as possible after the patient's death.

National Referral Centre 0800 432 0559

Eye donation can take place at a hospital, hospice or funeral home, up to 24 hours after death.

Donation may also still be possible after a patient has died at home. In this instance a family member or close friend would need to notify the National Referral Centre as soon as possible after death. If donation can go ahead, it would take place in a funeral home.

In all scenarios, the specialist nurse will explain the donation process, discuss medical history and explore any faith, beliefs or cultural preferences they may have. The family or close friends will have the opportunity to ask any questions.

Throughout the donation, the body is treated with respect and dignity and our specialist team will ensure that the donor maintains a natural appearance. Family and friends can still visit after donation has taken place and funeral arrangements are not affected.



Every year thousands of patients across the UK have their sight saved or restored through the generosity of cornea donors.

Laura's story

Laura had a cornea transplant in her right eye when her vision deteriorated and then when the same unexplained problem developed in her left eye, she had a second transplant.

She said: *"Had I not had both corneas transplanted, I probably wouldn't have been able to continue in my job, and therefore wouldn't have met my partner and probably wouldn't even have my son!"*

"I feel forever grateful to my donors and their families. Words are not enough to express my gratitude."



Andrew's story

Andrew died of pancreatic cancer.

His daughter Vivien said: *"The doctors told us the one thing they could safely give to a patient was his corneas, from his eyes."*

"We had a letter to say both of Dad's corneas had successfully been used for transplant. It's a miracle to us that two people somewhere have had their sight restored or saved because of Dad."