

# Transplants save lives

- Professor Sir Magdi Yacoub described transplantation as “one of the great success stories of the latter half of the 20th century”.
- Surgeons have been saving the lives of dying people through transplantation for more than 50 years.
- The first successful transplant was of a cornea on 7 December 1905 in what is now the Czech Republic.
- The first major organ transplant success involved the donation of a kidney between living twins in Boston, USA, on 23 December 1954.
- The first heart transplant was performed in South Africa in 1967, by Dr Christiaan Barnard.
- Transplants are vital operations and their success depends entirely on the generosity of donors and their families who make this life-saving gift.
- The UK’s NHS Organ Donor Register was launched in October 1994 and by April 2010 included the names of over 17.1 million people who had pledged to donate their organs for transplant after their death.

## Waiting and hoping

- More than 10,500 people need an organ transplant in the UK.
- Last year (2009-10) a record 3,709 people’s lives were transformed by a transplant. More than one in four of all transplants are from living donors.
- Transplants are now so successful that many more patients can be considered for treatment in this way.
- Advances in surgical skills and better drugs mean that a year after surgery:
  - 96% of kidneys in living donor transplants
  - 93% of kidneys from people who have died
  - 91% of liver transplants
  - 83% of heart transplants
  - 79% of lung transplantsare still functioning well. These figures are improving all the time.
- The median (average) waiting time for an adult kidney transplant is 1,110 days. Children, who are prioritised in the matching sequence, wait on average 277 days.
- Adults wait an average of 184 days for a heart and 519 for a lung. Children wait an average of 93 days for a heart.
- Adults wait an average of 149 days for a liver transplant, while children wait an average of 86 days.
- About 1,000 people die every year in the UK while waiting for an organ transplant or because they become too ill to survive an operation and are removed from the list.

## Between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2010:

- 3,709 organ transplants were carried out, thanks to the generosity of 2,021 donors.
- 2,739 patients' lives were dramatically improved by a kidney or pancreas transplant, 160 of whom received a combined kidney/pancreas transplant.
- 978 lives were saved in the UK through a heart, lung, liver or combined heart/lungs, liver/kidney, liver/pancreas or heart/kidney transplant.
- A further 3,099 people had their sight restored through a cornea transplant.
- Organs from 959 deceased donors were used in the UK to provide 2,647 transplants.
- A record number of 552 non-heartbeating donor kidney transplants took place and accounted for one in five of all kidney transplants.
- A record number of 99 non-heartbeating donor liver transplants took place, a 24% increase on 2008-09.
- Nearly one in four (more than 24%) of liver transplant recipients were aged 60 or over, while patients aged under six received over 8% of liver transplants.
- 33% of heart transplants were given to patients under 18, while patients over 60 received 6% of all heart transplants.
- Patients with cystic fibrosis or fibrosing lung disease received 40% of combined heart/lung and lung-only transplants.
- More than one in six kidney transplants, including living donor transplants, were received by people of minority ethnic origin in the UK.
- Living donor kidney transplants are increasing – 475 in 2004-05, 589 in 2005-06, 690 in 2006-07, 831 in 2007-08, 927 in 2008-09 and 1,038 in 2009-10 – and now represent more than one in three of all kidney transplants.
- 16 living donors gave a kidney altruistically to unknown recipients.
- 32 living donors gave kidneys that were used in 'paired' transplants.
- 23% of living kidney donations in the UK were parent to child and 27% were sibling to sibling.

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