

April 20, 2010

## National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week 2010

The Southern Alberta Organ and Tissue Donation Program (SAOTDP) is an integrated donation program coordinating organ and tissue referrals for Southern Alberta

### Organ Donation:

- Organ transplantation is possible only because of the generous gifts that family members make at the time of death of a loved one.
- Organ donation includes heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, pancreas and small bowel.
- Organs require blood flow to function, and can only be apart from a body for a few hours.
- Organ donors are either living (kidney, liver and lung) or have suffered a neurological or 'brain' death.
- **Southern Alberta Organ Donation Program**
  - In 2009, there were 21 referrals to the Southern Alberta Organ Donation Program

### Tissue Donation:

- Tissue donation includes eyes, bones, skin, heart valves, connective tissue (tendons).
- Anyone can be considered for tissue donation after cardiac death as long as they meet medical criteria.
- In 2009 there were a total of 366 tissue referrals and 278 donors.
- **Southern Alberta Tissue Program:**
  - There was 497 cadaveric tissues transplanted and 165 surgical bone transplanted in 2009.
- **Lions Eye Bank**
  - Since its inception 25 years ago, the Lions Eye Bank has helped over 4,300 people regain eyesight through corneal transplant alone.

### How to Donate:

- There is no age requirement to donate. Donors have ranged from the first days of life to over 90 years old.
- Talk about donation with your loved ones. Get the facts. Make the decision that's right for you. Discuss your decision with your family.
- Document your decision on the back of your Alberta Personal Health card.
- The final decision of whether to donate or not is requested from your family. Make your wishes known to make that process easier for your loved ones.