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In honor of April's National Donate Life Month, the Newspaper In Education Program is working with NJ Sharing Network to present this special series. More than 1.5 million Americans have their health restored each year through tissue donation. This series will examine tissue donation and transplantation from different angles.

Saving lives through organ & tissue donation

"Why are tissue transplants necessary?"

Every year, there are approximately 40,000-45,000 tissue donors and 43,000 eye donations in the US. One tissue donor can provide up to 50 life-enhancing transplants. Potential tissue donation includes bones, veins, skin, corneas, heart valves and tendons. Medical conditions such as severe trauma, degenerative joint disease, arthritis, burns, sports injuries, birth defects, some cancers and other conditions require the use of donor tissue.

VIP Corner

Surgical Recovery Specialist

"From the moment I went out on my first case, I found my calling. The case involved an 18-year-old donor, close to the age of my son. I thought about the gift he was giving and the impact on the recipients of his donated tissue. I also thought about the donor's family and the grief they were experiencing. I approach every case with the utmost respect for the donor and family. When I'm in the operating room, I'm part of a dedicated, caring team that is there to honor the final wishes of the donor. At the end of the recovery, I say, 'thank you' to the donor for the gift."



Tonya Whithead
Surgical Recovery Specialist

Today's Exercise:

Working as teams and using today's newspaper, list all stories that relate to health issues. Choose what you believe are the major issues.

Could any relate to tissue donation? How?

What Can I Do?

Because tissue donation is so important, suggest making it a topic for a school or class speaker.



For more information and age-appropriate educational materials, or to register as an organ and tissue donor, visit:

www.NJSharingNetwork.org or call 800-742-7365.