



OneLegacy

saving lives through organ, eye & tissue donation

BENEFITS & CONSIDERATIONS OF DIRECT CONTACT

Our experience shows that the great majority of direct contact between donor families and recipients has an outcome that is positive, fulfilling and worthwhile. While potential problems are certainly rare, we want to ensure that all parties have considered the possible benefits and considerations.

Benefits

- An opportunity for the recipient to convey their sorrow for the donor family's loss and their gratitude for the donor family's generosity.
- An opportunity for the donor family to share with the recipient how loved the donor was by the family and how those left behind miss the donor.
- An opportunity to experience a sense of peace.
- An opportunity to complete some further grief work.
- An opportunity to reinforce the donor family's belief that donating was the right decision.

Considerations

- A loss of anonymity for you, the donor, the donor family or the recipient, could lead to contact that you may not be able to control or end. For example, one person may expect more from the relationship than a few casual meetings or occasional correspondence. Another may want private sharing between the two of you, or someone may want to tell all their friends and family about you and what you have done.
- Social media is an example of a very public forum where some are uncomfortable having pictures or private information posted. Please do not post identifying information about others on social media without permission from the other person.
- Differences in cultural, religious, or ethnic backgrounds may cause disappointments or future difficulties not previously anticipated.
- Some recipients may feel guilty that they, rather than the donor, are alive and may even feel unworthy of the gift. These feelings may heighten when meeting donor families. Please seek professional support if this happens or contact OneLegacy for referrals.
- Gifts: In rare cases, donor families or recipients may ask for gifts or financial support. Gifts of any substantial value (above \$50) from either donor family or recipient are inappropriate, should be refused and reported to OneLegacy.
- Secondary loss: if something happens to either the donor family or recipient after the donor family and recipient meet, there can be a sense of grief or secondary loss that either experiences. Having supportive people with you and around you and/or having access to professional resources to process these emotions and reactions is important to consider.

If you decide to move forward with direct contact, our OneLegacy Donor Family Aftercare staff is available to help facilitate direct contact or a meeting if this is helpful to you. In our experience, some families feel more comfortable to have us or a representative from OneLegacy present to provide support and reassurance. Together, we can also make accommodations for a neutral site for this first time meeting.

Once you have read through this information, please let us know if you have any questions and/or would like our assistance in facilitating a meeting or exchange of identifying information. You may contact the Donor Family Aftercare department at **800-423-7220 or familycare@onelegacy.org**.