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## News Release

April 23, 2013

**MULTIMEDIA ALERT:** English-language and Spanish-language video of Dr. Prieto is available on the [Mayo Clinic News Network](#).

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### For Immediate Release

#### **More Hispanic Organ Donations Needed, Mayo Clinic Transplant Experts Say**

ROCHESTER, Minn. — April is National Donate Life Month, held to encourage organ and tissue donation and to celebrate donors who give a new life to others. Organ donors are always in short supply. In the United States, more than 118,000 people are waiting for organ transplants, and 19 percent are Hispanic. Experts say that there is a need for organ donation in the Hispanic community because a transplant recipient is more likely to find a match among donors with the same ethnicity.

“It is always possible to find matches across ethnicities, but all ethnic groups benefit when we increase the number of donors from the same ethnic background,” says [Mikel Prieto, M.D.](#), surgical director of the [kidney](#) and [pancreas](#) transplant programs at [Mayo Clinic](#) in Rochester. “For example, certain blood types are more prevalent in ethnic minority populations. Because matching blood type is important for organ transplants, using minority donor organs is beneficial.”

The information below about organ transplant in the Hispanic community is provided by the [Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network](#):

- Kidney, liver, heart, pancreas and lung are the organs most in demand by Latinos.
- Last year, nearly 4,000 Hispanics received a transplanted organ.
- Out of 118,074 candidates waiting for an organ transplant in the United States, 23,015 are Hispanics.

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- In 2012, Hispanics donated 1,834 organs. Deceased donors provided 1,033 organs, and 801 came from living donors.

Mayo Clinic experts believe that the following cultural misconceptions can be a reason why some people fear becoming an organ and tissue donor:

- Many people believe that their religion opposes organ donation.
- Some fear that doctors will not work as hard to save their life if they are donors.
- It is common to hear concerns that donors, or their family, will need to pay for the organ donation.
- Organ and tissue donation would interfere with having an open-casket funeral.
- Rich and famous people go to the top of the list when they need a donor organ.

For more information, please visit [MayoClinic.org/transplant-center/](http://MayoClinic.org/transplant-center/).

Dr. Prieto is available to speak to reporters about organ transplantation in the Hispanic community. To arrange an interview, please contact Soledad Andrade at Mayo Clinic Public Affairs, 507-284-5005 or send an email to: [newsbureau@mayo.edu](mailto:newsbureau@mayo.edu).

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