



The Gift of *Life*

JAHAN SAHGAL

This is Ananya. She and her Mummy have just been to her Naani's funeral, and she is feeling sad.

'Mummy, what am I going to do without Naani being around?'



'I know, Ananya, I miss her very much too. But you know, Naani is always going to be around:'

'How, Mummy?'

???



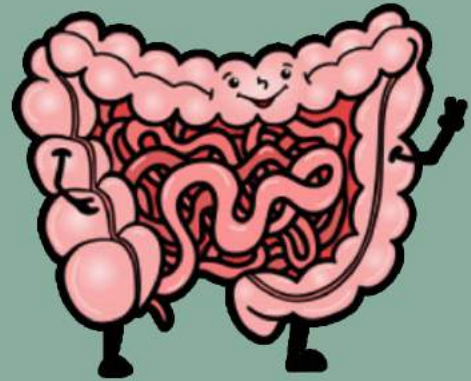
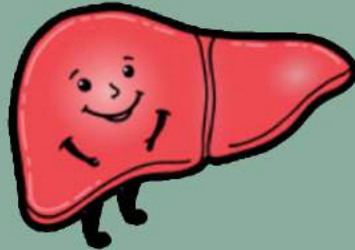
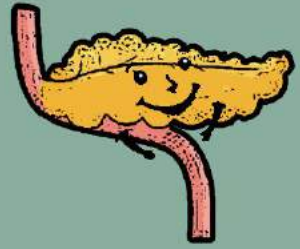
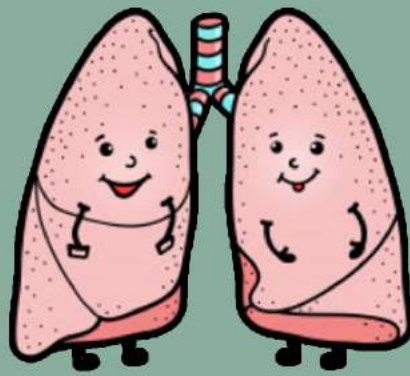
'Well, Ananya, when Naani was alive she made a special pledge. She promised to be an "organ donor". Do you know what that means?'

'No!'

'This means that she decided that even when she died, she wanted to be able to help people.'



'Every person has a lot of different types of organs. They live inside us, and their job is to make our body work!'



For example, Naani had two kidneys - Karthik and his sister Kanika - who helped keep her blood clean.

Harsh the Heart kept her blood pumping, Lalu and Leela the Lungs helped her breathe,

Sarthak the Small Intestine, who helped digest her food, and Puneet the Pancreas, who played a very important role in turning her food into fuel.

She also had Laila the Liver who helped filter her blood before it went to the rest of her body.

They all work together to keep Naani healthy!



'Now, sadly, Naani's life has come to an end, but many of her organ helpers still have lots of energy left! They're not ready to stop working!'

'But how can they do that when Naani's not alive anymore?'



'This is where Naani's pledge comes in, Ananya. Because Naani promised to be an "organ donor", the doctors were able to transfer her organs to other people who really need them:

This was because although her brain had died, her organs were still functioning and could be donated to others.

In these kinds of situations, the person who has died can donate their organs and help other people. And that's what Naani did!



Mummy: 'For example, a young man who is 18 years old had been having some trouble with his kidneys – He's been waiting for a new kidney for years, and now that Naani has donated one of hers, he's much better and is on his way to being healthy again. '





'In total, the doctors were able to use Naani's organs to help 8 people who were suffering because their organs were not working properly !

They were even able to donate a part of her eyes called the corneas, to two little girls who are now able to see because of your Naani!'

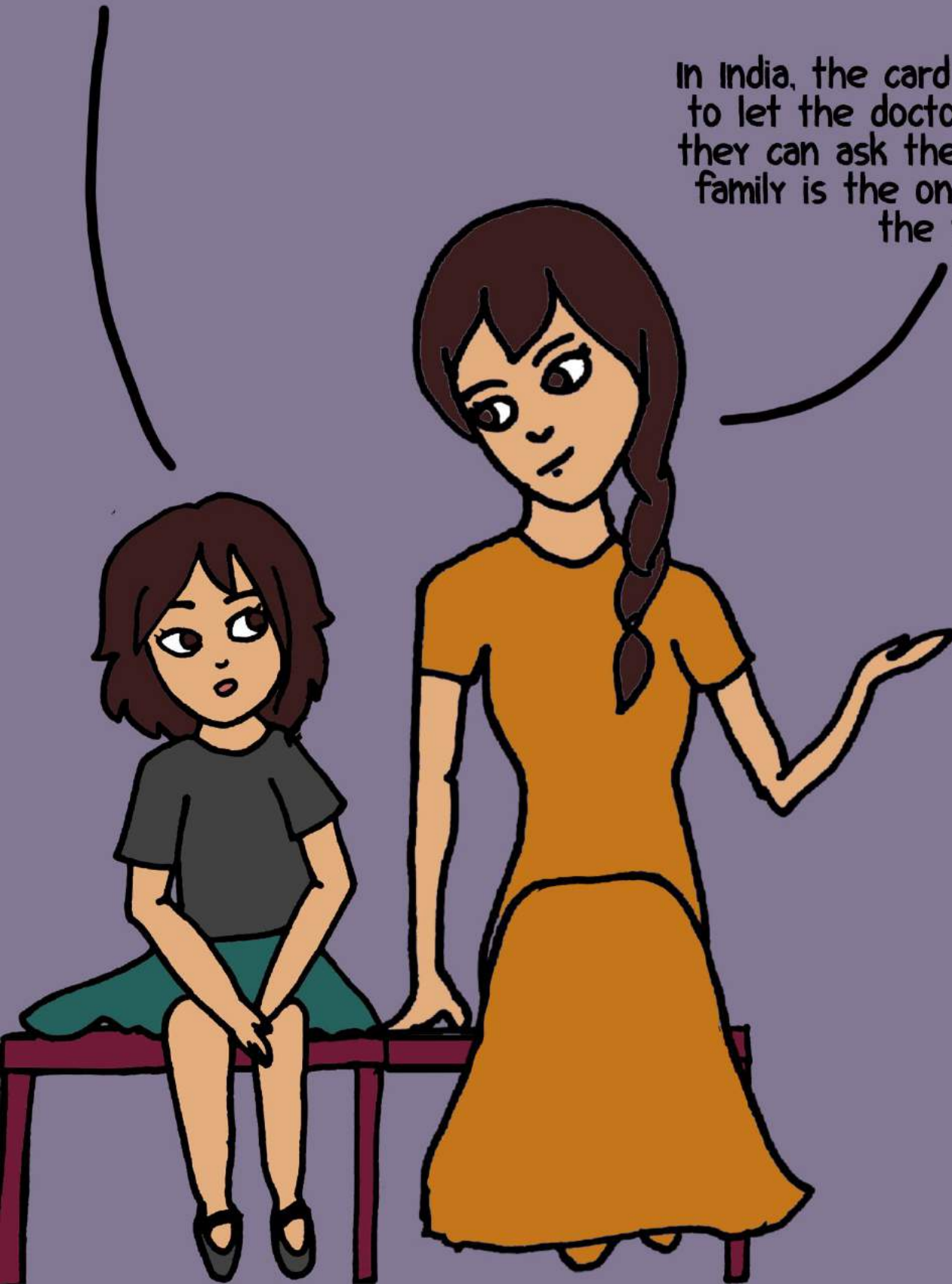


'Not at all! Once you're 18 you just have to fill out an online pledge form, then you get a special donor card!

'Wow, I can't believe that Naani was able to help all these people even after she died! Is it hard to become an organ donor?'

It's also important that you tell your family about your decision because they must also give their permission for the donation.

In India, the card is just there to let the doctors know that they can ask the family - the family is the one that makes the final decision!





'I'm so proud of my Naani!
Now I understand that she
is still here with us, in our
hearts and in the way she
has helped so many other
people!'



'Exactly! In fact, I have a special surprise for you...' We don't know who these people are, because the law doesn't let us, but we have been told where each of Naani's organs went and what kind of a person they helped – for example, their age and gender. Naani has made a difference in their lives! A big difference!



'It seems so easy to become an organ donor! I wish more people would do it! When I'm 18, I'm definitely going to become a donor! Until I'm old enough, I'm going to do research on organisations like ORGAN India to know more about organ donation and transplants, and how we can save so many lives even after we're gone! I'm going to tell my friends and teachers about this too.'

'I'm so proud of you!
Naani would be too!'





This book was made in consultation with
ORGAN (Organ Receiving and Giving
Awareness Network) INDIA. To find out
more about their work, please visit
www.organindia.org .