

Islamic Views on Organ Donation & Transplantation

by
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Question 1: Can a person donate some of his organs to a patient who is in need of transplantation?

The issue of organ donation can take different forms and the answer varies in each situation:

(A) During your **life-time**:

1. Major organs: You are not allowed to donate your “major” organ to anyone.
2. Minor organs: You can donate your “minor” organ.
Skin grafting and donating blood would be considered donation of a minor organ. Even donating a kidney would be permissible provided the donor has another healthy kidney.

(B) After your **death**:

According to the late Ayatullāh al-Khu’ī, you can donate some of your organs (whether minor or major) provided you have expressed your intention clearly in your will. However, Ayatullāhs Sistāni and Jawād Tabrizi do not recognize the validity of such a will.

Question 2: Is it necessary for the recipient of my organ to be a Muslim?

The recipient of your organ does not necessarily have to be a Muslim; you can donate your organs, wherever permissible, even to a non-Muslim.

Question 3: Can I as a Muslim accept the transplantation of a non-Muslim’s organ to my body? If yes, what will happen to the issue of *najâsat*?

There is no problem in transplanting a non-Muslim’s organ to your body.

As for the issue of *najâsat*, for the few days after the transplantation, that particular area of your body will obviously remain *najis* because of the surgery done on you and you will have to do wuzu or ghusl in the *tayammum* or *jabirah*

form. “Jabirah” means the wuzu or ghusl done over a bandage. (See my *Ritual & Spiritual Purity* for details.)

But after the area has healed, there should be no problem at all because the former organ of the kâfir has become, after transplantation, your organ and, as such, it will be considered *tâhir (pâk)*. This is based on the rule of one of the *mutahhirât* known as *intiqâl*.

The same would apply if a najis animal's organ (e.g., a baboon's heart or a pig's organ) is transplanted to your body.

Question 4: If a minor child dies, do his father and mother have the right to donate an organ of their child for transplantation to another child/adult who needs it?

No parent has a right to donate his or her child's organ or body to anyone. What we have mentioned above is restricted to the donation of one's own organs.

Question 5: Keeping in mind the belief in resurrection and life after death, what will happen to my organ which has been transplanted to another person, probably a non-Muslim? Will I be responsible if my organ was used for a crime or a sin?

First of all, after transplantation, your organ will no longer be considered legally yours so there is no need to worry being accountability for crimes or sins committed through it!

Secondly, the God who created us from nothing will absolutely have no problem in putting us together on the day of resurrection. Read the following verses from surah Yâ Sîn:

And he (i.e., man) gives us an example and forgets his own creation; he says, “Who will give life to the bones when they are rotten?”

Say: “The same God will give life to them Who brought them into existence the first time, and He is Aware of all creations...Is not He who created the heavens and the earth capable of creating the like of them? Sure! And He is the Creator, the Knower.

“His command, when He intends anything, is only to say to it, ‘Be,’ and it comes to existence. Therefore, glory be to Him in whose hand is the kingdom of all things, and to Him you shall be brought back.” (36: 78-83)

Let us worry about our own deeds and let Allah worry about how He is going to resurrect us!

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