How do I become a donor?

If you decide you would like to become a donor on your death, you need to join the NHS Organ Donor Register to ensure your wishes are recorded. Discuss your decision with those closest to you so that they are aware of your wishes. Adding your name to the register is simple and quick:

- You can register online at organdonation.nhs.uk
- Or call 0300 123 23 23

To find out more about organ and tissue donation, visit organdonation.nhs.uk

Organ donation and religious beliefs

A guide to organ donation and Muslim beliefs
the medical profession is the proper current medical knowledge considers brain organ donation must be given freely without be a stranger, but tomorrow that person from a range of terminal conditions such as enhance the life chances of those suffering use transplanted organs and tissues to the potential donor is always sought before than before now suffer from these conditions and some good has come from their loss. Donation is an individual choice and views differ even within the same religious groups. Mutilating organ donation is a gift of the organ to help someone else who needs a transplant. Hundreds of people’s lives are saved or improved each year by organ transplants. Organ donation can be donated by people who have included the heart, lungs, kidneys, liver, pancreas and small bowel. Tissue such as skin, bone, heart valves and corneas can also be used to help others.

Islam and organ donation

In Islam there are two schools of thought with regard to organ donation. The human body, whether living or dead, enjoys a special body, wether living or dead, enjoys a special Islam ic law emphasises the preservation of perm it the prohibited’ (al-darurat tubih al-organ donation with regard to saving or provided that the benefit outweighs the personal cost that has to be borne. Therefore, although the above quotation enjoins the saving of life this is not without restriction. M uslim scholars organ donation is not granted help from A llah.”

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

Holy Qur’an, chapter 5, vs. 32

The saving of life is not absolute, but subject to the amount of cost that has to be borne. Therefore, although the above quotation enjoins the saving of life this is not without restriction or caveats.

According to a similarly large number of Muslim scholars organ donation is not permitted. They consider that organ donation compromises the special honour accorded to man and this cannot be allowed whatever the cost. Scholars, such as the Islamic Fiqh Academy of India, allow live donations only."

Multi Mohammed Zubair Butt, Muslim Council of Britain

Therefore it is very clear that in Islam:

"Organ donation is a very personal choice and one should consider seeking the opinion of a scholar of their choosing.”

Multi Mohammed Zubair Butt, Muslim Council of Britain

That said, one of the fundamental purposes of Islamic law is the preservation of Allah grants those who save the life of others. To help in this matter the reader’s attention is drawn to the following life-saving Fatwa: In 1995, the UK-based Muslim Law (Sharia) Council resolved that:

- the medical profession is the proper authority to define signs of death
- current medical knowledge considers brain stem death to be a proper definition of death
- the Council accepts brain stem death as constituting the end of life for the purpose of organ transplantation
- the Council supports organ transplantation as a means of alleviating pain or saving life on the basis of the rules of the Sharia
- Muslims may carry donor cards
- the next of kin of a dead person, in the absence of a donor card or an expressed wish to donate their organs, may give permission to obtain organs from the body to save other people’s lives
- organ donation must be given freely without reward, trading in organs is prohibited
- this is supported by Muslim scholars from some of the most prestigious academies of the Muslim world who call upon Muslims to donate organs for transplantation. These include:
  - the Islamic Fiqh Academy of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (representing all Muslim countries)
  - the Grand Ulemma Council of Saudi Arabia
  - the Iranian Religious Authority
  - the Al-Azhar Academy of Egypt

When can organ donation take place?

Doctors and their colleagues are committed to doing everything possible to save life. Organs are only removed for transplantation once the patient’s life have failed and after death has been certified by doctors who are entirely independent of the transplant team. Most donated organs in the UK come from people who die from a severe brain injury, and who are on a ventilator in an Intensive Care Unit. The brain injury will have damaged the vital centres in the brain stem which are essential to maintain life. Doctors call this ‘brain stem death’. This is not the same as being in a coma or persistent vegetative state. Tests are carried out to strict guidelines to make absolutely certain when this has happened. When brain stem death is pronounced the patient may still be on a ventilator, and have a heart beat which continues to pump blood around the body. This prevents the organs from losing the oxygen-rich blood supply which is necessary for a healthier transplanted outcome. Organs can also be donated from people whose death has been certified because their heart has stopped. Certification in these cases is the responsibility of hospital doctors who are entirely independent of the transplant team.

Care and respect

The removal of organs and tissues is carried out with the greatest care and respect. The family of the deceased and their aftercare staff can contact a chaplain or local religious leader if the family wishes.

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