

# Organ Transplantation

## Is the Brain Death the Human Death?

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**What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. (Psalm 8:4, 5)**

### INTRODUCTION:

#### Numbers of Transplantation in Some Countries

The table shows numbers of people who received organs from dead body (heart death), brain death or also living people (liver and kidney).

USA records the biggest numbers and other European countries are not much different from England.

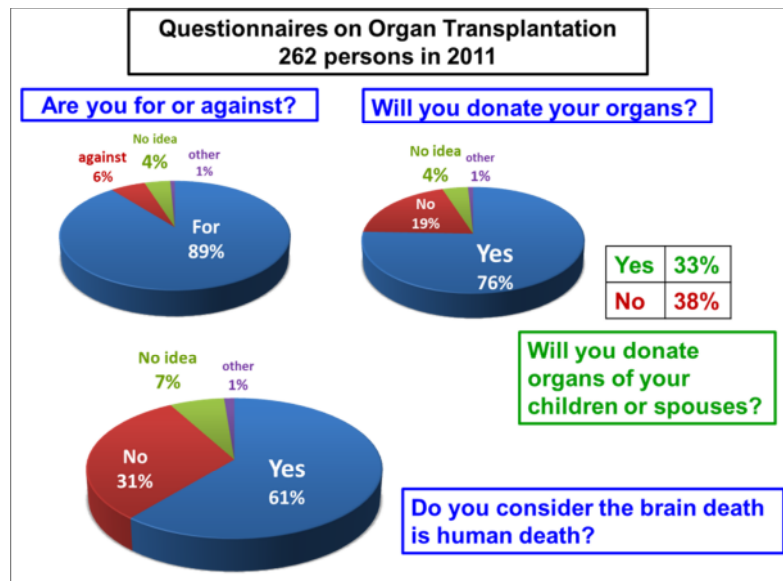
	Heart	Lung	Liver	Kidney
Japan	13	25	476	1201
Korea (2005)	26	8	594	754
England	133	146	701	2,497
USA	2,190	1,505	6,319	16,519

(2008, Korea 2005)  
 NPO-juridical person: Japan Transplant Recipients Organization  
<http://www.jtr.ne.jp/syokutoha/genjyo.html>

### [ I ] Survey on Brain-Death Transplantation

In my “Life Science” classes, students conducted the survey on organ transplantation and data obtained are summarized as the figure shown which was obtained in 2011.

Some 90% of people approve organ transplantation in general but only 76% are willing to donate their organs in case of brain death. And interestingly those who would donate their own organs seem not to be willing to donate organs of



of their children or spouses, and only 33% would donate love ones’ organs and more people (38%) say “No”. This may be showing the Japanese people’s “view of the life and death” that those who regard their own organs are just parts of dead bodies and do not mind to take their organs out after brain death yet do not want to see that happens to their love ones.

Data show us that people who approve the organ transplantation do not necessarily consider that the brain death is the human death. I find it difficult to understand this inconsistency.

## [II] Organ Transplantation : For or Against

### (1) Action of Japanese Government:

As shown above, Japanese people in general are favorable for transplantation yet many do not wish to commit actively. Although Japanese people's behavior is such and rather reluctant to donate organs, many patients with severe disease wish to receive the organ transplantation and are in a long waiting list. Therefore, the governmental office is trying to encourage the activity by using many ways based on the standard that transplantation is good, saves sick people and justice.

Donor card: On the back of Health Insurance card & Drivers-License

**Will you donate organs? Choose one & mark (O)**

1. Yes. In case of brain or heart death.
2. Yes. Only after the heart death.
3. No.

**Mark ( x ) to organs you do not wish to donate.**  
Heart Lung Liver Kidney Pancreas Intestine Eye

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date signed \_\_\_\_\_

One example is the questionnaire (simplified one is shown above) provided on the back of the Health Insurance card and drivers-license in order to recommend the donation of organs in case of the brain or heart death. Although the card does not force to donate organs, yet strongly recommends to practice.

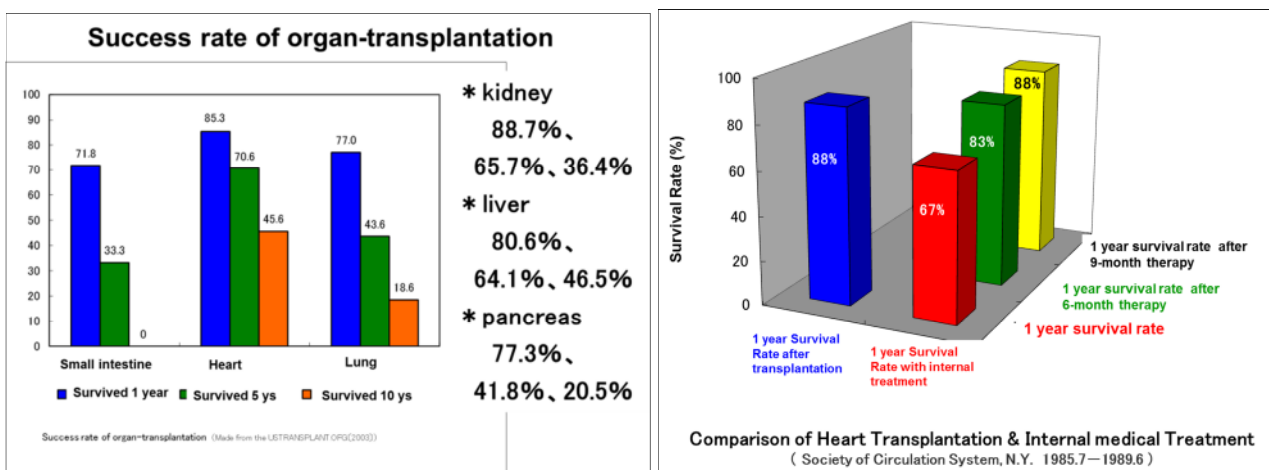
### (2) Reasons for Promoting the Organ Transplantation

- \* Transplantation can save life.
- \* No other way to save life.
- \* Dead person's organs must be used to save others. "One life rather than two death"
- \* Social common belief: Transplantation is goodwill & deeds and the justice.

### (3) Reasons for opposing the Organ Transplantation

- \* Definition & standard for judgment of brain death are obscure.
- \* Unpardonable to alter criteria of death in order to obtain good organs from donors.
- \* Many recoveries from brain death must not be overlooked.
- \* Inexcusable to kill others - this is a murder - by just pitying patients

## [III] Is Organ Transplantation Really Effective? Medical View



**Figure left:** Data shows the survival ratio after the transplantation. For example, 72% of individuals after transplantation of small intestine survived 1 year, 33% for 5 years, and no one survived after 10 years. Heart and lung transplantation gave a slightly better result as shown in the figure. How many years, do you think, these patients would have survived without transplantation? No one knows.

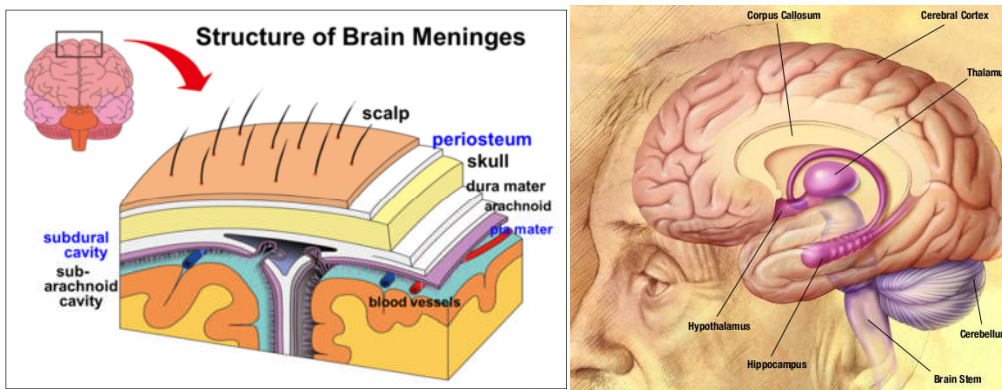
The survival rate does not mean the life prolongation rate at all. They may even have survived similarly or even longer years without transplantation.

**These data do not mean that these patients would have died almost immediately without transplantation, rather they may as well have survived.**

**Figure right:** shows the comparison between heart transplantation and internal treatment only. By the transplantation of the heart, 88% of patients survived 1 year but only 67% survived without surgery, so transplantation gave a little better survival rate. But 83% patients who have survived for 6 months with internal treatment survived next 1 year and 88% for 9month-survivors survived for another 1year.

These data suggest that transplantation does not necessarily save life, and may in some cases even have been more dangerous than internal treatment.





#### [IV] Structure and Important Functions of Brain



#### Brain:

Brain is the important organ as life-support system

The inside of the brain is protected with the bones and membrane with many layers as shown in the illustration. The cerebrum, cerebellum, and many other parts have their own important roles as the support of human being. And the basic or fundamental role to support the life depends mainly on the brainstem.

- **It controls emotions, vision, hearing, personality & all voluntary actions.** cerebrum 
- **Important in motor control & involved in some cognitive functions.** cerebellum 
- **Regulates the central nervous system & involved in cardiac & respiratory functions.** brainstem 
- **Control basic functions: heart rate, breathing, sleeping etc.** 

Superficial definition of “Brain Death”

\*After brain death, the heart beat stops in a short time without fail & never revives.

\*Life prolongation with artificial respirator is short, 1~2 weeks. ... Not true

Judgment of brain death must be 100%correct ... impossible

## [V] Brain Death vs Human Death

- Is the brain really dead even when it was judged dead?
- The patient with brain death is really dead as human?
- Brain death syndrome is death of just one of many organs.
- A patient with brain death: a living body with dead brain, ..... contradiction.
- Human death used to be sentenced according to three symptoms  
: breathing stops, pulse stops & dilation of the pupil.

Examples of recovery after having been judged as “brain death”

\*In 1961 with one patient, brain wave disappeared with encephalitis & this patient recovered completely after 28days.

\*A 5 years old boy : was drown & DOA. After 6 months, he recovered completely.

Record of period survived after brain death

More than 6months : 7 persons out of about 10,000 people,

1year: 4 persons, 2.7year : 1 person, 5.1 year : 1person, 19.5 year : 1 person

## [VI] Problems of Transplantation after Brain Death or Heart Death

### 1) Lazarus Syndrome after brain death

\*Extraction of organs from donors with brain death

- Causes spasm of face and rapid / violent blood pressure upturn and tachycardia
- Donor moves & writhes

**Brainstem may probably alive & functioning.**

\*In ordinary surgery, this symptom is regarded patients feeling severe pain and increase the anesthetic

### 2) Problem of transplantation from heart death

Need to take organs out right after heart beat stops. This is desperately important in order to use fresh organs for transplantation.

\*Brain may be still alive & functioning

\*Donor may be suffering severe pain & terror on the extraction.

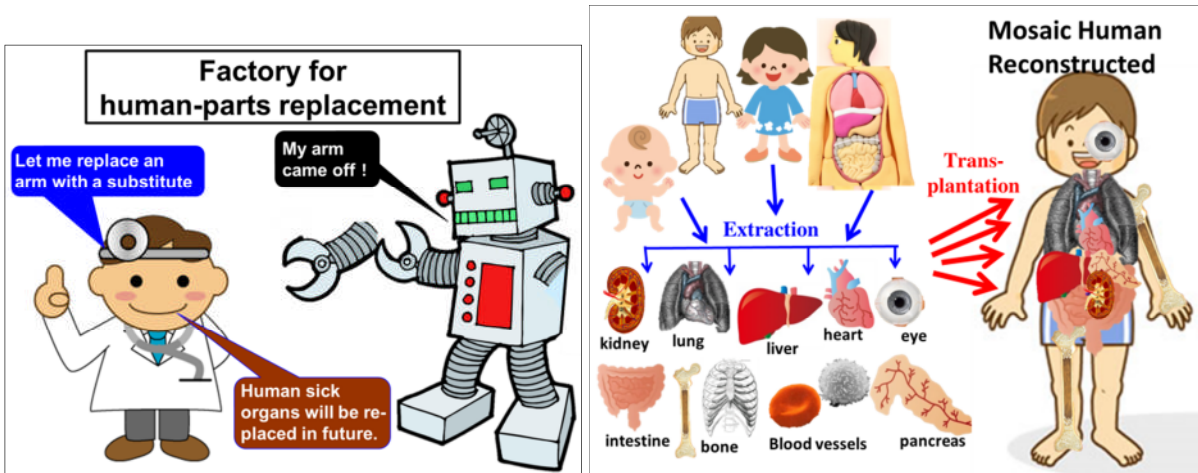
## [VII] Idea Behind the Organ Transplantation

### 1) Factories for human-parts replacement

Various machines and tools as well as computer, even robot, can break and you can repair them by replacing damaged parts for new ones. This idea may be good for robots, since robot is a mere machine.

But this idea must not be applied to human and does not work at all.

Human is not a robot.



## 2) Organ transplantation vs Human death

\*Organ transplantation is the idea that the human is mere assembled material of parts, organs.

\*For the convenience sake, the brain death is socially regarded as human death.

\*Yet medically and biologically, the human is not the mass of organs but the integrated individuals.

\*Brain: CNS, life support, regulation center

\*Heart: circulation center, life support

\*Other organs and tissues are also very important for the individual (1Co 12:14~26).

\*The brain death or heart death is typical transit point to the death which is the continual due course.

Human is not a mere aggregate of organs.

Since you were precious in My sight, You have been honored, And I have loved you; (Isa 43:4)

## [VIII] Closing Remarks

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." (Gen 1:27, 28)

Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. (Psalm 100:3)