

Muslim Perspectives on Organ Donation

Having reliable information is very important when faced with difficult decisions. This information was developed in partnership with Islamic leaders to help you and your family understand organ donation. We hope this information guides your decision.

Organ donation shows sympathy and compassion for others. It can save a person's life and allow those with a chronic illness to greatly improve their quality of life. Since preservation of life is one of Islam's higher objectives, many scholars believe that organ donation is a form of sadaqah jariyah — a continuous charity — that Allah will reward.

Is organ donation permissible for Muslims?

When something is not explicitly mentioned in the texts as being halal (lawful) or haram (unlawful), scholars note that Islam requires weighing the potential benefits and harm. It is based on that rule that the majority of contemporary scholars and fiqh councils permit organ donation, as consistent with the overarching Islamic principles of mercy, compassion, and caring for one another. Islamic scholars note that donation must be for the preservation of life, or quality of life, of the recipient.

“If anyone saved a life it would be as if he saved the life of the whole humanity.”

Quran 5:32

Can Muslims donate organs to people of other faiths? Can Muslims receive organs from people of other faiths?

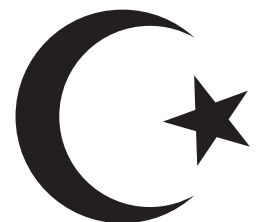
The answer to both questions is yes.

If a Muslim donates his or her organs, does that prohibit them from receiving a janazah (Islamic burial)?

Not at all. A Muslim organ donor can still be washed, shrouded, and prepared for janazah after death.

“May Allah guide you in this decision, grant you and your loved ones success, and reward you with the highest station in Jannah. Ameen.”

Shaykh Tahir Wyatt, PhD



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Organ Donation

Organ donation takes place after death is declared. This can follow:

- Brain death – i.e. all vital functions of the brain cease irreversibly as confirmed by physicians.
- Donation after Circulatory (or Cardiac) Death – also known as DCD, takes place after a patient has a non-survivable neurologic injury, is on a ventilator, and the next of kin decides to discontinue life-sustaining therapies.

In general, it is permissible to donate any organ after death. Whole body donation is not permissible as there must be a janazah when possible. Organ recovery is similar to surgery performed on a living person, with respect to the sanctity of the body.

“My donor family are my heroes. In their grief they chose to bless me with a second chance at life.”

Abdul-Kareem Salahuddin
Liver Recipient



Developed in partnership and consultation with:

AZK Communications, LLC is led by Aliya Z. Khabir, a public relations expert who specializes in helping healthcare providers properly and professionally engage with our Muslim community to achieve the best possible health outcomes.

Shaykh Tahir Wyatt, PhD, a published academic and instructor of Islamic studies, is Executive Director of the United Muslim Masjid in Philadelphia and also Scholar in Residence at the Gracious Center of Learning and Enrichment Activities in Cherry Hill, NJ.

Additional resources:

Khadijah Alderman Funeral Services 1924 W. Hunting Park Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19140
1-215-225-6600 | info@khadijahsfuneralsvc.com | www.khadijahsfuneralsvc.com

Lenwood Jones Funeral Home 5911 West Girard Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19151
215-472-7200 | www.lenwoodjonesfuneralhome.com

Jason Lloyd Funeral Home 6643-45 Torresdale Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19135
www.jasonlloydfuneralhome.com

All families are encouraged to discuss donation with their loved ones.

For more information, call 1-800-DONORS-1 or visit donors1.org.

