

Organ Donation – from a Hindu perspective

We at Dipika humbly prostrate and seek the divine blessings of Mother Sarasvati in compiling this ground breaking article. This subject matter has been considered a sensitive and controversial area by both the religious and scientific communities. Therefore we at Dipika are going to analyse, to a certain extent, different perspectives and thus give many sides a fair chance. We hope that this article will enlighten the public as opposed to causing further confusion. This article may result in more questions than answers, unfortunately, due to its sensitive nature.

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Sanatan/Vedic (Hinduism) Dharma with regards to Organ Donation

There is no Shastric evidence that prohibits Hindus (Sanatanists) from donating their organs and tissues. There are many references that support the concept of organ donation in Vedic (Hindu) scriptures, which are explained in further detail below.

Sanatan (Hindu) Dharma and organ donation:- There are many references that support the concept of organ donation in Vedic (Hindu) scriptures. *Daan* is the original word in Sanskrit for donation, meaning “selfless giving”. *Daan*, in this context, also includes the donation of organs (and blood). In the list of the ten *Niyamas* (virtuous acts), *Daan* comes third.

The Manusmrti (The “law book of mankind”):- "Of all the things that is possible to donate, to donate your own body is infinitely more worthwhile."

Life after death is a generally accepted belief of Hindus and is an ongoing process of rebirth. The law of Karma decides the fate and journey of the soul in the next life. The *Bhagavad Gita* describes the mortal body and the immortal soul in a simple way like the relationship of clothing to a body:

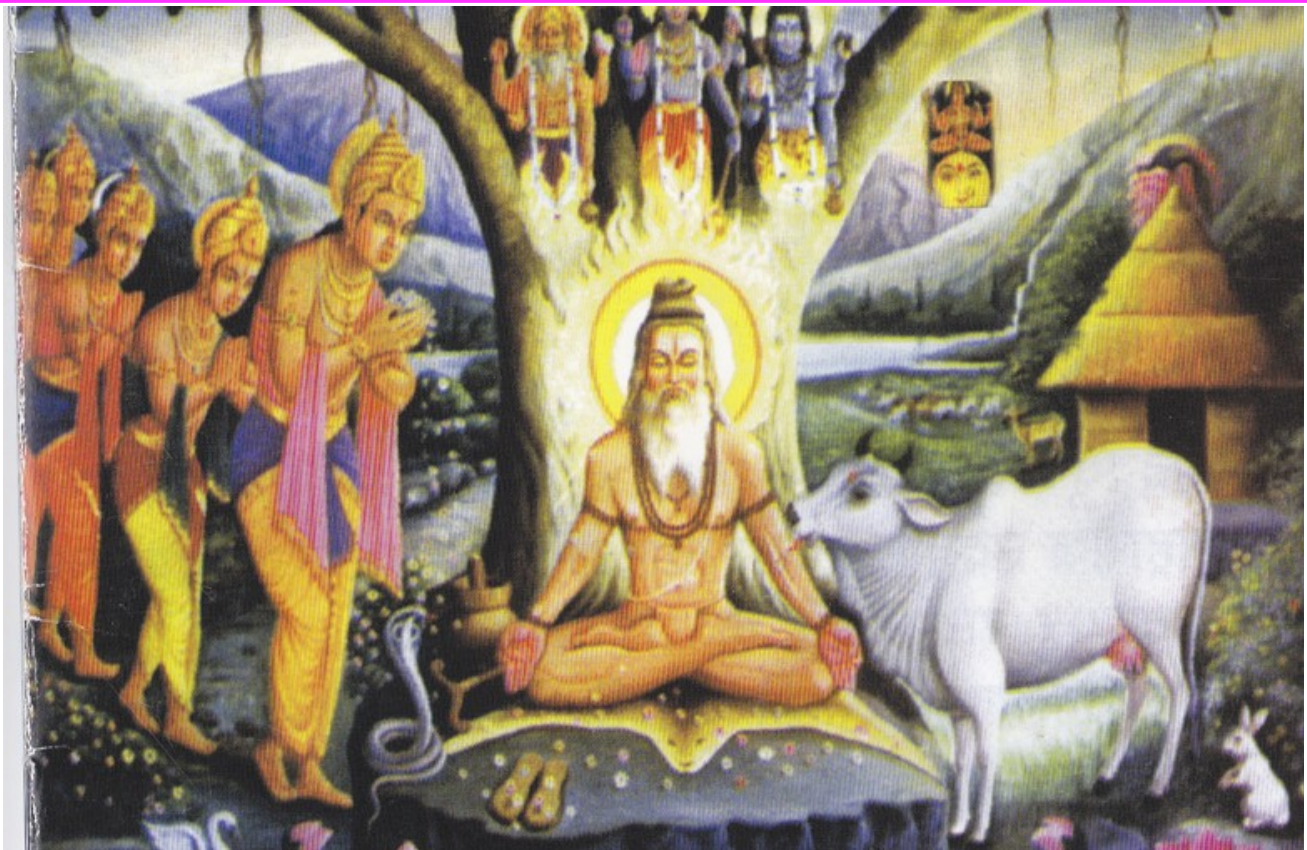
"vasamsi jirnani yatha vihaya
navani grhnati naro 'parani
tatha sarirani vihaya jirnany
anyani samyati navandi dehi."

"As a person puts on new garments, giving up the old ones, the soul similarly accepts new material bodies - giving up the old and useless ones." (Bhagavad Gita chapter 2 verse 22.)

Vedic scientific and Vedic medical treatises (*Charaka* and *Sushruta Samhita*) form an important part of the *Vedas*. *Sage Charaka* deals with internal medicine while *Sage Sushruta* includes features of organ and limb transplants.

The following katha is mentioned in the Srimad Bhagavatam Maha Purana Canto 6 Chapters 9-12. Provided below is an extract of this katha, as it is quite voluminous as it appears in this Purana.

"One of the great virtues of humankind is helping the needy. Many people are considered brave for their virtue of giving away their wealth and/or knowledge and often try with all their might to uphold this virtue. Vedic shastras provide many extraordinary instances where various persons preferred donating their body parts and wealth in order to prioritize *Daan* or "Tyaag", as it is referred to in Vedic shastras. However, Maharishi Dadhichi was held in high esteem for his "Tyaag" and selflessness. The katha of Maharishi Dadhichi and his actions is considered the most generous of all of ancient Vedic times. During the great war between the Devatas (Celestial beings) and Rakshas (demons), the demons had clearly dominated in the battlefield and forcefully relieved the Devatas of their arms using black magic (generally Tantrik) powers which were far beyond the comprehension of the Devatas. The Devatas knew for sure that if they had lost the remainder of their weapons, it would result in circumstances whereby it would prove difficult for them to be saved thereafter. However, in order to make sure that their weapons were safe, they went to Maharishi Dadhichi, who agreed to keep the weapons in his protection, even neglecting the danger to his own life. The Rakshas (demons) used all their might to steal those weapons and hurt Maharishi Dadhichi, although their efforts proved to be in vain. Much time had passed and the Devatas had not retrieved their weapons. Maharishi Dadhichi could not think of any means by which he could always have the weapons under close watch at all time. Finally, one day, with his divine powers, he placed all the weapons in his sacred water pot, dissolved them in the water and drank the mixture. He was now relieved of his duty and could continue his regular penance undisturbed.



Maharishi Dadhichi, and the Devatas requesting his assistance to defeat the demons.

After some time, the Devatas returned and requested Dadhichi for their weapons. Dadhichi Maharshi replied, "I waited for such a long time for you Celestials to come and collect your weapons. I thought you wouldn't return. So I consumed them". The Devatas went on pleading, "Maharishi, we are now in a position to fight Rakshas. If we do not have our weapons, we will not be in a position to fight them, to protect Dharma and the universe". Maharishi Dadhichi contemplated the circumstances calmly and was convinced that the Devatas deserved help. Their weapons were now more powerful than before. He said to the Devatas, "Alright, retrieve your weapons back by killing me. They are presently in the form of my bones". The Devatas refused to do so and said, "We certainly do not want to commit the sin of killing a great Brahmin Maharishi like yourself. We cannot afford to commit such a heinous act". Now, the weapons were inside the Maharishi's body in the form of flesh and bones, and it was difficult to retrieve. Therefore, he created a huge fire, entered into it and enveloped his own body in the flames. The Devatas were in a state of bewilderment as they could not comprehend what was happening. Lord Brahma suddenly appeared and converted each of the bones of the Maharishi into various powerful weapons and presented them to the Devatas. Dadhichi's back bone was transformed into the "Vajra" (thunderbolt) and was given to Lord Indra with which he brought an end to the most powerful Rakshas, such

as Vritrasura. The power of the Maharishi's divine virtue and powerful soul made the weapons more powerful than ever.

By virtue of such an act of selflessness, whenever acts of sacrifice and selflessness were performed in future, Maharishi Dadhichi was remembered and homage was paid to him.”

In the Mahabharata, Karna (also known as Kaunteya - son of Kunti) was the son of Surya-deva (the Sun Deity) and Kunti, born to Kunti before her marriage with Maharaja (King) Pandu. Karna was the closest friend of Duryodhana and fought on his behalf against the Pandavas (his brothers) in the Kurukshetra War. Karna fought against misfortune throughout his life and kept his word under all circumstances. Karna is often remembered for his sacrifice, courage, charity, valour, and selflessness. The birth name of Karna was Vasusena - meaning the one born with wealth (his golden Kavacha and Kundala). Karna was born with a Kavacha (impenetrable armour) and Kundala (golden earrings).



The Kavacha and Kundalas were the gifts of Karna's father, Surya-deva (The Sun Deity), bestowed upon him for protection. The Kavacha, embedded into his chest, made it virtually impossible to harm him via weapons. The Kundalas protected the entire portion of his ear's cartilage from attacks. Together, they made Karna almost immortal as there was no other way to kill him. The Kavacha and Kundalas were forged in the fires of Surya and Agni and had near limitless strength – almost of the level of immortality. The Pandavas' elder brother Yudhishthira always considered Karna to be

the foremost warrior in the world and worried about this fact in the prelude to the upcoming war.

Lord Indra realized that Karna would be invincible in battle and unable to be killed as long as he had his Kavacha and Kundalas on his body. He approached Karna as a poor Brahmin during Karna's daily morning sun-worship. Surya-deva warned Karna of Lord Indra's intentions, but Karna thanked Surya-deva and explained that he was bound by his word and could not turn anyone away from his door empty-handed. When Lord Indra approached Karna in the form of a Brahmin beggar and requested his Kavacha and Kundalas as alms, Karna revealed that he knew the Brahmin's true identity, but assured him that he would never turn anyone away. Lord Indra became ashamed and took his normal form. Cutting the armor and earrings off of his body, Karna handed them to Lord Indra. After this, heavens opened up and all the Deities and Celestial beings in all realms appeared in the sky and showered flowers on Karna. They praised him and stated that it was the greatest charity the world had ever witnessed. In order to escape from such severe shame, Lord Indra asked Karna to accept a gift in return. Karna rejected this offer, stating that he did not give charity with an expectation of receiving anything in return. All the Deities, Devatas, Sages and Celestial beings requested Karna to accept any gift in return, in order to save them from the insult that was caused by Lord Indra upon them. Obeying the Celestial beings and as per the request of Lord Indra, Karna, as his father had instructed him, asked for the Vasavi Shakti (a particularly powerful celestial weapon). Lord Indra granted the boon, with the stipulation that Karna could only use the weapon once.

Although the aforementioned information is not related to an internal body part, it was a part of his body that made this great warrior virtually invincible.

In the Srimad Bhagavatam Maha Purana, 9th and 10th Cantos, the following katha is mentioned.



The katha is as follows: “The Celestials, wanting to test the compassionate nature of King Shibi, took the form of a hawk and a pigeon. The pigeon, chased by the hawk, fell onto King Shibi's lap and sought his protection. The hawk argued that the pigeon is its meal. King Shibi offered to compensate the hawk, for the loss of its meal, with his own flesh. Finally, he offered his flesh to be consumed, and the Celestials showed him their true form and blessed him.”

The various kathas with regard to Lord Ganesh and his head replaced with that of an elephant.

Sage Kashyapa's curse to Lord Shiva:- Lord Ganesha's birth relates to an incident in which Lord Shiva killed Aditya, the son of a sage Kashyapa. Lord Shiva restored life to the dead boy by replacing Aditya's head with that of Indra's elephant, but this could not pacify the outraged sage Kashyapa. Kashyapa cursed Lord Shiva and declared that Lord Shiva's son would lose his head and undergo the same fate as his own son.



Lord Shiva affixed an elephant head to his son:- After creating Lord Ganesha from sandalwood, Mother Parvati posted Lord Ganesha on guard duty at her residence. Mother Parvati ordered Lord Ganesha to not allow anyone to enter the residence, and Ganesha followed his mother's instructions. After a while, Lord Shiva came home. Even after telling him that he is the husband of Parvati Devi, Lord Ganesha didn't allow him to enter. Lord Shiva became enraged and ordered his army to destroy the boy, but they didn't succeed. Ganesha possessed such power by virtue of being the son of Shakti (Power) herself. Then Lord Shiva cut off the head of Ganesha and threw it away using his trident. When Parvati Devi came to know about this, she became furious and decided to destroy all of creation. Lord Brahma, being the Creator, pleaded that she reconsider her plan. She said she would, but only if two conditions were met - one, that

Lord Ganesha be brought back to life, and two, that he be forever worshipped before all the other Deities. Lord Shiva sent Lord Brahma out to bring back the head of the first creature he comes across, that is laying with its head facing North. Lord Brahma soon returned with the head of a strong and powerful elephant, which Lord Shiva affixed onto Lord Ganesha's body. Breathing new life into him, Lord Shiva declared Lord Ganesha to be his elder son and made him chief of his army. As promised, Lord Shiva gave him the status of being foremost among the Deities, and leader of all the ganas (classes of beings), Ganapati.

Lord Shiva and Mother Parvati's gift to Gajasura:- Once there was an elephant-demon, named Gajasura, who was undergoing a penitence. Lord Shiva, pleased by Gajasura, inquired of his desire. The demon requested that Lord Shiva live in his belly. Lord Shiva granted this request and he took up residence in the demon's stomach. When Lord Shiva did not return to Mount Kailasha, Mother Parvati searched for Lord Shiva everywhere, but to no avail. Thereafter, Mother Parvati went to Lord Vishnu, requesting the Supreme Lord to find her husband. Lord Vishnu, who is omniscient, reassured her, "Do not worry, Lord Shiva promptly grants his devotees whatever they ask of him, without regard for the consequences; for this reason, he is in some trouble. I will find out what has happened." Thereafter, Lord Vishnu dressed Himself as a flutist and transformed Nandi (the bull of Lord Shiva) into a dancing bull. Lord Vishnu instructed Nandi to dance in front of Gajasura. Pleased with the enchanting performance of the bull and flutist, Gajasura asked the flutist to tell him what he desired. The flutist said: "Release Lord Shiva from your belly." Gajasura understood that the flutist was none other than Lord Vishnu Himself, the only one who could have known that secret. Knowing this, Gajasura threw himself at Lord Vishnu's feet. He liberated Lord Shiva and asked him one last wish, "I request of you that everyone remember me by adoring my head when I am dead." Lord Shiva, after Gajasura's death, substituted Gajasura's head for his own son's. From then on, in order to prosper, prayer must begin with the adoration of Lord Ganesha. This is the gift of Lord Shiva to Gajasura.

The gaze Of Shani Deva:- Mother Parvati invited all Celestials to visit her and see her baby, which she received from Lord Vishnu's blessings. When Lord Shani (planet Saturn of the Navagrahas (the nine planets)) visited and laid eyes upon infant Ganesh, the infant's head was incinerated - because Shani was cursed with the gaze of destruction. Lord Vishnu mounted onto Garuda and traveled throughout the world, and brought back the head of an elephant which was affixed to the infant. All the Celestials present, blessed infant Ganesh, that unless he is worshipped first, they would not accept any worship.

In the Srimad Bhagavatam, Vishnu Purana and Vayu Purana, Daksha is mentioned. Daksha's son-in-law is Lord Shiva, who married his daughter Sati Devi. Daksha

organized an enormous Yajna and intentionally ignored Lord Shiva and Sati Devi. Despite Sati Devi being discouraged by Lord Shiva, who told her not to go to a ceremony performed by Daksha where she and her husband were not invited; the parental bond made Sati Devi ignore social etiquette and her husband's wishes. Sati Devi went to the ceremony alone. She was snubbed by her father, Daksha, and was insulted by him in front of the guests. Sati Devi, unable to bear further insult, then immolated herself in the sacrificial fire. Lord Shiva, upon learning about the terrible incident, in his wrath, invoked Virabhadra by plucking a lock of hair and thrashing it on the ground. Virabhadra and bhutaganas marched South and destroyed all the premises of Daksha. Daksha was decapitated and the yajna shaala (ceremonial site) was devastated in the rampage. The bhutaganas celebrated victory by plucking the beard of the 'Presiding Master' of the Yajna, Sage Bhrigu, as a war souvenir. Daksha was later forgiven and given life by affixing a ram's (male goat) head to his body, and the Yajna was allowed to be completed, in all the Deities' presence.



Virabhadra – who was born out of Lord Shiva's hair - Virabhadra or Veerabhadra is a fearsome form of Lord Shiva. He was created by the wrath of Lord Shiva and destroyed the Yajna (fire sacrifice) of Daksha, after Daksha's daughter and Lord Shiva's consort Sati Devi had self-immolated in the sacrificial fire. He is described as a warrior who eventually blinded Bhaga, subdued Lord Indra and broke, among many other Deities, Pushan's teeth. Other deities fled the battlefield, unable to withstand his power.



Lord Shiva and the reasoning behind him wearing tiger skin.

Why does Lord Shiva wear tiger skin? The largest organ in the human body is the skin. One of the most popular images of Lord Shiva is that of him sitting on a tiger skin. Another popular image is that of him wearing a tiger skin or walking with a tiger skin wrapped around him. The majestic tiger skin illustrates Lord Shiva's tremendous power, adding to the aura that already surrounds this enigmatic Supreme Deity, who forms one-third of the Vedic trio of divinity. However, there is an interesting katha in the Shiva Purana that explains how Lord Shiva came to sit on a tiger skin, as well as why he chose to wear it. According to the Shiva Purana, Lord Shiva used to wander around the world as a bare-bodied sage. One time, he reached a forest which was home to several powerful rishis. The rishis lived with their wives in their ashram. Though they were the wives of forest-dwelling rishis, the women could not help becoming enamored with the young, bare-bodied Lord Shiva – although he remained unaware of their presence. It goes without saying that with their wives distracted, the peace of the forest ashram was shattered. When the rishis realised that the reason for the waywardness of their wives was the young, bare-bodied Lord Shiva, they decided to teach him a lesson. The rishis then dug a huge pit, on the path of Lord Shiva's daily route. When Lord Shiva came upon the pit, the rishis went a step further and released a tiger into the pit. Without no difficulty, whatsoever, Lord Shiva killed the tiger and tore off its skin. In a further gesture of victory, Lord Shiva draped the tiger skin over

his body. No ordinary being indeed. The rishis thus realised that this visitor was no ordinary being but a Celestial Deity himself. They offered obeisances at his feet upon becoming aware of his true power. Since that incident, Lord Shiva continues to wear the tiger skin, which illustrated his victory not only over a ferocious animal, but also his power in all three worlds.

Cowhide and the making of a Vedic drum:- Some people use cowhide to construct certain parts of a mridanga (a Vedic type of drum). Cowhide produces an excellent sound. Hence, certain parts of percussion instruments, when made of cowhide, generate excellent sounds. According to Dharma shastras, mridanga skin should be obtained from the hide of cows that have passed away due to natural causes, and not from the hide of slaughtered cows. If this is the case, no sin is incurred. Nowadays, cows are sometimes specifically slaughtered for obtaining their hide. The hide is procured from non-Hindu abattoirs.

There is also support for organ donation within the principles of Hinduism, provided that it fulfills the criteria of Dharma (righteous living), according to Sanjay Jagatia, General Secretary, of the National Council of Hindu Temples UK. "Whilst organ donation is down to individual choice, every act or intention of anyone should be according to the dharmic tradition. The Vedic scriptures stress the importance of performing noble deeds of selfless giving and sacrifice. Therefore, it is right to donate organs, only if the act of donating an organ has beneficial results," he said.

"The important issue for a Hindu is that which sustains life should be accepted and promoted as Dharma (righteous living). Organ donation is an integral part of our living." Hasmukh Velji Shah, International Trustee, World Council of Hindus.

"Organ donation is in keeping with Hindu beliefs as it can help to save the life of others." the late Om Parkash Sharma MBE, former President, National Council of Hindu Temples UK.

"I always carry my donor card with me. It says that my whole body can be used for organ donation and medical purposes after my death. I would like to encourage as many people as possible to do the same." the late Dr Bal Mukund Bhala, Co-ordinator Hindu International Medical Mission, Former President Hindu Council UK.

Does my religion object? Many of the major religions in the UK for example, support organ donation and transplantation. They all agree that organ donation is an individual choice. However, within each religion, there are different schools of thought, implying that views may differ and should be respected.

Is blood is an organ? Blood is a tissue, not an organ. While organs are generally considered to have a single, specified function (or perhaps a group of closely-related

functions), blood (the fluid inside the vessels, not the vessels themselves) has many different functions: deliver O2 from lungs to cells.

Buddhism with regards to organ donation

There are no rules in Buddhism for or against organ donation, but a wish to relieve suffering is central to the Buddhist faith.

The decision regarding organ donation must be made by each individual. People may decide for or against it, without one choice being seen as right, and the other wrong.

Although the relief of suffering is a fundamental part of Buddhism, the needs and wishes of a potential donor shouldn't be compromised by the wish to save a life.

The death process of an individual is viewed as a very important period of time. In some religions, the moment of death is defined by criteria which differ from those of modern Western medicine.

"Non-attachment to the body can be seen in the context of non-attachment to self and Buddhist teachings on impermanence. Compassion is a pre-eminent quality. Giving one's body for the good of others is seen as a virtue." Dhammarati, Western Buddhist Order.

A note on the above from Dhammarati. To one that may read between the lines the "giving one's body" maybe viewed as sexual content. But of course this is not so and the word rather that should have been used is "donating one's body."

"I would be happy if I was able to help someone else live after my own death." Phramaha Laow Panyasiri, Abbot, the Buddhaviharra Temple.

"Organ donation is acceptable in Theravada Buddhism. It's a Buddhist virtue to generously extend help to other sentient beings and this covers the case of organ donation." Sogyal Rinpoche - The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying.

Christianity with regards to organ donation

Sacrifice and helping others are key themes across all forms of Christianity, and therefore a decision regarding the donation of organs is seen as positive.

Christians are encouraged to help others in need. They consider organ donation an act of love, and a way of following Jesus' example.

Healing and saving life is a great gift. Jesus sent his twelve disciples out with the imperative to heal disease and illness.

Matthew Chapter 10:8 - "Heal the sick - freely ye have received, freely give."

Revelation Chapter 21: 4,5 - "In eternity we will neither have nor need our earthly bodies: former things will pass away, all things will be made new."

David Ebor, Archbishop of York: "I hope that Christian people will seriously and positively consider organ donation. The ready willingness to donate an organ is a clear sign of that sacrificial self-giving for others patterned by Jesus Christ."

His Holiness Pope John Paul II: "Every organ transplant has its source in a decision of great ethical value. Here lies the nobility of a gesture which is a genuine act of love. There's a need to instil in people's hearts a genuine and deep love that can find expression in the decision to become an organ donor."

Council of African and Afro-Caribbean Churches (UK): "Any act that can save life, such as organ donation, is a great thing and quite acceptable within our faith."

Methodist Church UK: "The Methodist Church has consistently supported organ donation and transplantation in appropriate circumstances, as a means through which healing and health may be made possible."

The Rt Reverend Michael Nazir-Ali, Bishop of Rochester: "Christians should generally be encouraged to help others in need and organ donation can be a very concrete and sacrificial way of helping."

Islam with regards to organ donation

One of the basic aims of the Muslim faith is the saving of life. This is a fundamental principle of the Muslim Law, Shariah, and Allah greatly rewards those who save others from death.

Violating the human body, whether living or dead, is normally forbidden in Islam. However, the Shariah waives this prohibition in a number of instances: first, in cases of necessity; and secondly, in saving another person's life. It is this Islamic legal maxim 'al-darurat tubih al-mahzurat' (necessities overrule prohibition) that has great relevance to organ donation.

Holy Qur'an, chapter 5 verse 32 "Whosoever saves the life of one person it would be as if he saved the life of all mankind."

Sheikh Dr MA Zaki Badawi, Principal, Muslim College, London: "If you happened to be ill and in need of a transplant, you certainly would wish that someone would help you by providing the needed organ."

Summary of the lifesaving Fatwa

The Muslim Law (Shariah) Council of Great Britain 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 Shariah.
- 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.

Muslim scholars are unanimous in declaring that organ donation is an act of merit and in certain circumstances can be an obligation.

The following institutes all call on Muslims to donate organs for transplantation:

- The Shariah Academy of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (representing all Muslim countries)
- The Grand Ulema Council of Saudi Arabia
- The Iranian Religious Authority
- The Al-Azhar Academy of Egypt

In 1995, the Muslim Law (Shariah) Council UK issued a Fatwa (religious ruling) supporting organ transplantation as a means of relieving pain or saving life. Dr Abdullah Shehu, from the Muslim Council of Britain, said: "The consensus of The Muslim World League in Makkah, The Organisation of Islamic Conference in Jeddah and the Islamic Juridical Academy of India has encouraged organ donation as being a noble act and a measure to save lives. It is one of the five indispensable goals of Islam to save life."

Judaism with regards to organ donation

In principle, Judaism supports and encourages organ donation in order to save lives (pikuach nefesh). This principle can sometimes override the strong objections to any unnecessary interference with the body after death, and the requirement for immediate burial of the complete body.

Pirke D'Rav Eliezer, Chapter 48 "One who saves a single life - it is as if he has saved an entire world."

Judaism insists that no organ may be removed from a donor until death - as defined in Jewish law - has definitely occurred. This can cause problems concerning heart, lung and similar transplants where time is of the essence. Judaism insists that honour and respect are due to the dead (kavod hamet).

After donation, the avoidance of unnecessary further interference with the body, and the need for immediate interment, are again of prime concern.

As all cases are different, Jewish law requires consultation with a competent Rabbinic authority before consent is granted.

Sikhism with regards to organ donation

Sikhs have no objections to the donation and transplantation of organs.

The Sikh faith stresses the importance of performing noble deeds. There are many examples of selfless giving and sacrifice in Sikh teachings by the ten Gurus and other Sikhs.

Sikhs believe life after death is a continuous cycle of rebirth but the physical body isn't needed in this cycle - a person's soul is their real essence.

Guru Nanak, Guru Granth Sahib: "The dead sustain their bond with the living through virtuous deeds." and "The true servants of God are those who serve Him through helping others."

Dr Indarjit Singh OBE, Director of the Network of Sikh Organisations UK: "stressed the importance of giving and putting others before oneself as being at the heart of Sikh philosophy and teachings. He said: "Saving a human life is one of the greatest things one can do so for this reason, donating organs after death is acceptable to Sikhs." The Sikh religion teaches that life continues after death in the soul, and not the physical body. The last act of giving and helping others through organ donation is both consistent with and in the spirit of Sikh teachings."

In August 2017, the South African DSTV program "Carte Blanche" had a special documentary on organ donation. For further information, here the links that are provided below.

<https://carteblanche.dstv.com/become-organ-donor/>

<https://www.odf.org.za/>

A guide to organ donation and Hindu beliefs

Organ donation: Organ donation is the gift of an organ to help someone else who needs a transplant. Hundreds of people's lives are saved or improved each year by organ transplants.

Donation is an individual choice and views differ even within the same religious groups. **Why is it important to think about donating organs?** With medical advances it is now possible to use transplanted organs and tissues to enhance the life chances of those suffering from a range of terminal conditions such as renal, liver and heart failure. More people than before now suffer from these conditions and some ethnic groups seem to be more affected than others. **Consent:** The consent or permission of those closest to the potential donor is always sought before organs can be donated. This is why it is so important to discuss your wishes with your loved ones should you decide to become a donor. Many families who agree to organ donation have said that it helps to know some good has come from their loss. **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 all attempts to save life have failed and after death has been certified by 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 can see the body afterwards and staff can contact a chaplain or local religious leader if the family wishes.

The above Jpeg is sourced from these websites:-

www.gosh.nhs.uk/file/957/download?token=01j4AY4o

<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/866/Organ%20Donation%20%26%20Hindu%20Dharma%20%2D%20A%20Guide%20to%20Organ%20Donation%20%26%20Hindu%20Beliefs%201027.pdf>

The information regarding the other religions, aside from Hinduism, have been sourced (quoted and thereafter adapted) from other websites and have not been written by us at Dipika. Such information and quotes are largely included as is, and do not represent the views or knowledge of Dipika. We acknowledge and appreciate the above websites for the abovementioned information.

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DISCLAIMER 2:- Do note that Dipika is not affiliated to any Hindu group or organization. We at Dipika choose to remain an independent repository of spiritual advice. We appreciate that there are variances between organisations and humbly request that if our views differ from yours that you respect our decision not to conform to the prescripts of your particular organisation. We remain committed to spiritual advice which is based on scripture.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read this article. We pray that this article will assist you in some way and we also pray that it helps you to appreciate the beauty and remarkable foresight of our ancient Hindu culture. We wish to educate all readers and demystify the path of Hinduism (Sanatan Dharma). Please feel free to share these articles with friends and family who do not have direct access to our website or articles. If you use the articles in any form including blogs and/or as part of other articles kindly credit our website as a source. We hope that the articles serve as a reference to you and your family when you need clarification of certain topics. Jai Hind. Jai Shree Radha Krsna.

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