



# How should doctors choose recipients for organ transplants?

## GETTING ORIENTED

The weekly passage mentions issues related to the donation of human organs. Here is some information that might be helpful to students less familiar with the topic.

### Organ Donors

To be organ donors, people must sign papers that say that in the event of their death they are willing to have doctors remove their healthy organs so that they can be used by patients who need them. Many people carry a card on the back of their driver's license that says they are willing to donate or give their organs to someone else. This came about because when people are killed in car accidents, they are often very healthy people. An ambulance staff member or someone who knows the procedure to protect the organs is often quickly on the scene. A single donor can save as many as eight lives with the different organs in their bodies. The most commonly transplanted organs are kidneys, liver, heart, pancreas, lung, and small intestine.

### Organ Transplant Success

When organs are transplanted from one body to another, there are many things to consider. Blood tissue tests are done to try to find a patient and a donor that have similar blood types. The more ways that the body types match, the

greater possibility there is for success. Our immune systems, the systems that help us to control diseases, may mistakenly sense that the transplant is something that is going to harm the body. In this case, the immune system encourages the body to reject the new organ. Doctors and researchers are working all the time to improve techniques for organ transplants, and as the years go by, we see more and more success.

### The Immune System and Organ Rejection

The immune system is a natural defense system in the body that protects us by fighting disease and infection. This system develops antibodies that destroy foreign substances such as bacteria. Because donor organs do not exactly match an individual body type, the immune system may try to rid the body of the new organ. This process is called "rejection." The body rejects the new organ because it mistakenly confuses the organ as something negative to the overall body function.





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## EVIDENCE AND PERSPECTIVES

	<i>Some may have this view:</i>	<i>But others may think:</i>
<b>Donors</b>	Organ donors may feel very strongly about who should receive their organs, as they want to feel like they are doing something important. They might like to have a say in who receives the organ they are donating. They understand, however, that the present rules for organ transplant do not factor in a patient's income, celebrity status, race, or ethnic background.	Organ donors usually agree to give their organs knowing they will never have any control over who receives them. They want to give their organs to help humanity in general. They trust that doctors and researchers are making appropriate decisions about how organs are being distributed.
<b>Doctors</b>	There are some doctors that would like to see organ transplant more like a commercial business so they could do these operations for the highest bidders. Before the National Organ Transplant Act of 1984, it was not illegal to sell one's organs.	The job of doctors is to keep people alive. When they are doing an organ transplant, they are doing the best job they can to keep each individual patient alive. They have input when it comes to deciding who most needs the organs because they can tell when a person close to death will benefit from a donor organ.
<b>Organ recipients</b>	Certainly people who are near death because of organ failure might be interested in using any influence they can to persuade doctors that their need is greater than someone else. A very wealthy person, for example, might be willing to donate money to a hospital or to research if they could be moved up on the waiting list. Their money could be a great help to enlarge the transplant organizations as they now stand. They do understand, however, that at the present time, the policies that dictate or determine who receives the organs is not based on how much money that person has.	People who are waiting for organ transplants realize that everyone has an equal right to life. They appreciate that the process has saved many people as it now stands. They feel thankful for the opportunity to live longer with this procedure. They are not interested in changing the policies as they now stand. They also realize that so many different factors determine whether or not a patient is a viable or capable recipient. They have to trust that the doctors make these decisions as best they can.

- More than 114,000 men, women, and children currently need life-saving organ transplants.
- An average of 18 people die each day from the lack of available organs for transplant.
- In 2011 there were 8,127 deceased organ donors and 6,017 living organ donors, resulting in 28,535 organ transplants.
- 90% of Americans say they support donation, but only 30% know the essential steps to take to be a donor.
- Transplantation is one of the most remarkable success stories in the history of medicine. Despite continuing advances in medicine and technology, the need for organs and tissues is vastly greater than the number available for transplantation.

- Organs can be transplanted while the donor is alive. Kidneys are the most common organs to be transplanted from a living donor because we only need one kidney to live.
- At the University of Kansas Hospital, 90.3% of the liver transplant operations proved to be successful even 1 year after the transplant. The overall statistics at all hospitals in the U.S. for liver transplants is 89.2%.
- 80% of all organs are donated and used in the same geographic area. Such locally oriented allocation makes medical sense because less time between donor and recipient usually means a greater chance of a successful transplant.
- The National Organ Transplant Act of 1984, which was amended in 1988 and 1990, outlawed the sale of human organs and provided for the establishment of the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network.



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## ANNOTATIONS FOR TEACHERS

### Features of Academic Text: Signal words and phrases

Academic writing contains signal words and phrases that indicate for the reader a shift in direction. These can cause confusion for many students.

The word “**still**” in the second paragraph indicates to the reader that there is a contrasting idea.

“I did my homework. **Still**, my parents think I need to work harder!”

Students may know the word “**still**” in the context of a teacher asking them to “**sit still!**” Or, “I **still** don’t know how to divide fractions!”

In this passage, there are other signal words that indicate for the reader a contrasting idea or point of view.

- **while**
- **although**

Words and phrases not in the passage include:

- **on the other hand**
- **however**
- **meanwhile**
- **rather**
- **yet**
- **instead of**

In 2001, Tadamasa Goto came to the United States for a liver transplant at UCLA Medical Center. The transplant saved his life. Goto returned to Japan, where he leads a Yakuza gang called the Goto-gumi. His gang is said to engage in theft, blackmail, assault, and even murder. Many people were shocked and angry to hear that Goto had received a new liver. Healthy organs are a valuable **commodity**. Each year, thousands of Americans die waiting for organ transplants.

Goto did not break any rules to obtain the liver. In the United States, healthy organs are given to the sickest people, not the people who have waited the longest. **Still**, some people feel that the hospital should have denied Goto a new liver because of his criminal activities. Other people believe organs should not go to non-Americans. American taxpayers help fund American hospitals, and some people believe that these hospitals should help Americans first.

There are also those who think that the hospital acted correctly. They believe Goto has the same rights as any other patient. They do not want medical **practitioners** to

**evaluate** whether patients are good or bad people. Many religions and belief systems say that each person has **intrinsic** value, no matter who they are or what they have done. Doctors try to honor this intrinsic value by treating all sick people, even criminals, with equal care and respect.

Additionally, people who support Goto’s transplant remind us that no one can accurately predict how a person will act in the future. **While** we might **infer** from Goto’s past behavior that he may continue his criminal activities, no one knows for sure. **Although** some people believe that helping him live longer will just allow Goto to hurt more people, others say that he could repent and become a law-abiding person.

Interestingly, people born outside the United States donate about 20% of the UCLA Medical Center’s healthy organs. According to a UCLA doctor, denying transplants to foreigners could discourage these donations. About 95% of the hospital’s healthy organs are given to Americans.

What do you think? How should doctors decide who gets healthy organs?



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## GENERATING WORDS

### Word Parts (Roots and Prefixes)



**Remember:** The root of a word is the base part of the word that helps you figure out what the whole word means. It gives the basic meaning. Here are some other word parts found in this week's focus words.

Word Parts	Meaning	Examples
<i>in</i>	within, into	We learned about our <b>internal</b> organs in science class.
<i>fer</i>	to bring or carry	I <b>offered</b> to help my friend study for the science test.
<i>com/con</i>	together	I play soccer at the <b>community</b> center by my house.
<i>trans</i>	across, beyond or through	Because of the hurricane, my father had to find a different form of <b>transportation</b> to work.

With a partner, discuss how the word part can be used to help figure out the meaning of the word. Can you think of other words that have these roots or prefixes?

For example:

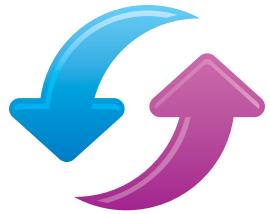
"The word part *in-* helps us to understand that **internal** organs are inside or within the body."

Our vocabulary word **infer** is made up of two of these word parts. When we read a story, we infer many things. For example, sometimes a protagonist or main character in a story will say mean things about another character who is more popular than she is. The reader has to infer that the protagonist is jealous!

Can you use your new knowledge of word parts help you to figure out the meaning of the word **infer**?



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### DEVELOPING DISCUSSIONS

#### Survey Grid

The survey grid is a matrix you can use to poll one another on issues. You get to hear similar ideas several times, reinforcing your thinking and vocabulary.

Name of student	Should doctors get to decide who gets organ transplants? Why or Why not?	Should there be a law that requires organs to go to people who live in the U.S. only?	Should there be a law that gives priority to patients who do not have a criminal record?
sample Zhong	No. Doctors should have to follow rules set by the government. They might be bribed with money.	Yes. There are too many people in this country who need organs and can't get them.	No. All people living in the U.S. should be given equal consideration.
Results	Yes: No:	Yes: No:	Yes: No:

**Step One:** Fill in each row on the survey grid by talking to one person at a time. Try to talk to as many people as possible or until you fill in all the empty rows. Paraphrase their response. If they use a focus word, write it down in the box.

**Step Two:** Count how many students said "Yes" or "No" for each questions. Fill in your totals at the bottom of the grid.

**Step Three:** Write a sentence or two that explains what your survey showed. Here are few sentence frames that you can use:

- The results of my survey show that \_\_\_\_\_
- The majority of the responses to my survey show \_\_\_\_\_ . The reasons people gave for this are \_\_\_\_\_ .
- The results of my survey suggest that the majority of students are for/against \_\_\_\_\_. Reasons for this include \_\_\_\_\_ .

**Step Four:** Report your finding to your classmates.