

Donated livers not harmed by travel distances, study finds

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Image courtesy of Blausen Medical

Broader organ sharing in U.S. will result in more air travel, researchers say.

(HealthDay)— Transporting donated livers long distances does not affect the quality of the organs, according to new research.

This finding may impact the number of organs transported by air rather than road.

The study was triggered by concerns about the increasing distances from donor to recipient that are being caused by the ongoing shortage of liver donations in the United States. The concern involves organ quality because increased travel time significantly increases the time the liver is in a cooled state outside the body (called "cold ischemia time").

In this study, researchers looked at more than 1,200 livers removed from donors in 2010, and found that the average time the liver was kept in a

cooled state outside the body was six hours for livers shared locally and seven hours for those shared regionally.

Average transport times were one hour for livers shared locally and two hours for those shared regionally. Ninety percent of livers shared regionally were transported by air, compared with 22 percent of livers shared locally, according to the study published online recently in the journal *Liver Transplantation*.

"Our findings indicate that non-transport factors impact [cold ischemia time] much more than transport time," Dr. Sommer Gentry, of the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., said in a journal news release.

"Broader sharing of livers will not have much effect on [cold ischemia time] or negatively impact the [liver](#) transplant recipient, but will significantly increase the number of organs transported by flying," Gentry concluded.

More information: The U.S. National Library of Medicine has more about [liver transplantation](#).

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