

Transplant from deceased donor with brain tumor appears to be safe

March 27 2023, by Elana Gotkine



The risk for cancer transmission in transplants from deceased donors

with primary brain tumors is low and long-term transplant outcomes are favorable, according to a study published online March 22 in *JAMA Surgery*.

George H.B. Greenhall, M.B.Ch.B., from NHS Blood and Transplant in Bristol, England, and colleagues examined the risk for cancer transmission associated with [organ transplants](#) from deceased donors with primary brain tumors in a cohort study. Data were included from 282 donors with primary brain tumors and 887 [transplants](#) from them, of which 778 (88 percent) were examined for the primary outcome.

Overall, 262 transplants were from donors with high-grade tumors and 494 were from donors who had undergone neurosurgical intervention or radiotherapy. The researchers found that during a median of six years, there were 83 posttransplant malignancies (excluding nonmelanoma skin cancer) in 79 recipients of transplant from donors with brain tumors, none of which were of a histological type matching the donor brain tumor. Transplant survival was comparable to that of matched controls. In donors with high-grade brain tumors, kidney, liver, and lung utilization was lower than in matched controls.

"These observations suggest that it may be possible to expand organ usage from donors with primary [brain tumors](#) without negatively impacting outcomes," the authors write. "Although this is likely to result in a modest increase in the number of transplants in the United Kingdom, our findings may be particularly relevant to countries with more conservative guidelines, including the United States."

Two authors disclosed financial ties to the biopharmaceutical industry.

More information: George H. B. Greenhall et al, Organ Transplants From Deceased Donors With Primary Brain Tumors and Risk of Cancer Transmission, *JAMA Surgery* (2023). [DOI: 10.1001/jamasurg.2022.8419](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamasurg.2022.8419)

Yuman Fong, Expanding the Donor Pool for Organ Transplant Using Organs From Donors With Cancer, *JAMA Surgery* (2023). [DOI: 10.1001/jamasurg.2022.8427](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamasurg.2022.8427)

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