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September 02, 2009

## CNN: Israeli Organ Brokers Still Operating—\$100,000 Buys Transplant But Not Good Health

### In a dirty rural Chinese hospital, an Israeli gets a kidney—and the Chinese 'donor' pays with her life.



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#### Black market for human organs 3:24

In a CNN investigation, a kidney broker explains the black market for human organs.

Source: [CNN](#) | Added September 2, 2009

#### '\$100,000 buys patient new kidney but not good health

#### Israeli man paid \$100,000 to a broker to get a new kidney

#### His body is rejecting the kidney that he received from an 18 year-old in China

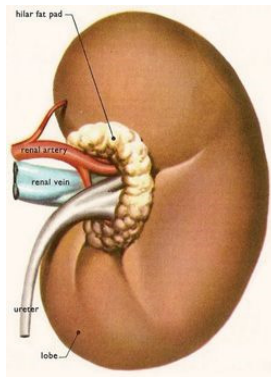
#### CNN investigating what appears to be a widespread black market in human organs

By Drew Griffin and David Fitzpatrick • CNN Special Investigations Unit

*Editor's note: Since the FBI arrested a Brooklyn businessman in late July on federal charges of organ trafficking, CNN has been conducting a worldwide investigation into the sale of kidneys, using willing donors and willing recipients from China to Israel to the United States. This installment examines two very different stories of Israelis involved in the trade.*

**TEL AVIV, Israel (CNN)** -- In a dank Tel Aviv hospital room, you can see at a glance just how desperate some Israelis are for a new kidney.

In one bed, Ricki Shai's mother lies practically unresponsive. Her diabetes is slowly killing her. It already has forced the amputation of both of her legs.



Sitting in a bed beside her is Shai's father, Yechezkel Nagauker, also a diabetic. But he decided, his daughter says, not to wait for a kidney donor.

"My father didn't want to be like my mother," Shai told CNN.

In April, Nagauker cut a deal with a kidney broker who promised him a new life and a new kidney for \$100,000. It was available only in China, the donor said.

"The broker went to him and suggested that he become a new man. 'Come with me. Two days, \$100,000, and two days you will be a new man,'" Shai said.

Today, Shai calls the broker "the killer."

Nagauker's body is rejecting the new kidney.

The family's story is one of several that have come to light in recent weeks as part of a worldwide CNN investigation into what appears to be a widespread black market in human organs, a network now being probed by authorities in Israel and the United States.

Nagauker went to China, where his daughter said he was taken to a rural hospital and given the kidney of an 18-year-old Chinese girl. Shai captured images on her cell phone of her father in what she described as a filthy hospital.

The surgery went poorly, and the girl who donated the kidney died shortly after surgery, Shai said.

"They gave her \$5,000, and she died," she said.

The broker has yet to face any sanctions. Until just last year, the entire transaction was not only legal in Israel, but some state-sponsored health insurance plans paid for transplants.

Before March 2008, Israeli law allowed citizens to go abroad for live organ transplants from non-related donors. Israeli investigators are looking intensively at illegal organ trafficking under the new law, the country's Health Ministry said.

Nancy Sheper-Hughes, who studies the organ trade, says Israel has become ground zero for both legal and illegal transactions. For years, she said, the very first treatment for anyone with kidney disease in Israel has been to find a new kidney rather than linger on official lists waiting for one.

"There's a belief, of course, that not only is transplant better than dialysis, but you want a living donor, because it's better than a kidney that was on ice or that was under a truck," said Sheper-Hughes, an anthropologist at the University of California at Berkeley and founder of the newsletter "Organs Watch."

"Michael," a broker who insists he operates legally but still wanted to keep his name and face a secret, told CNN that Israelis do not like to weaken their own. His mother, he said, needed a kidney and happily agreed to buy one in China rather than receiving a transplant from her own son. Watch "Michael" on how he brokers kidney transplants »

The broker said he has arranged nearly 220 transplants to date. It has been relatively uncomplicated so far, he said.

Israel's 2008 law banning the strict brokering of kidneys for cash has made things trickier, Michael says. But if a patient arrives at his door with a donor claiming to be a relative, he can easily send them overseas with no questions asked.

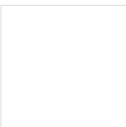
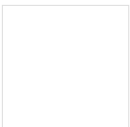
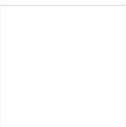
But are they really relatives?

"I don't know," the broker said. "I don't care. I don't deal with that."

For her part, Shai says her family is "breaking." But she has no doubt that the organ broker her family used is still in business.

"We are paying the price," she said.


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This is an unfortunate accident. It seems that the doctors did not follow proper protocol to ensure the donor's (18 yr old chinese girl) and recipient's life. I am not a doctor but maybe they should have done some preliminary tests to make sure that her kidney would be a good match for Nagauker. Is there some type of protection right laws in China that forbids the media from making the donor's name public?

Posted by: Yakira | [September 02, 2009 at 02:55 PM](#)



cnn trying to perpetrate a blood libel

please, this sort of thing has been going on for years...and not only is this israeli guy involved

and the reporter never knew about such things...what hogwash

Posted by: uncle joe mccarthy | [September 02, 2009 at 04:40 PM](#)



"I don't know," the broker said. "I don't care. I don't deal with that.".....

And neither does the hospital in most cases since the (right) kidney is not the issue here. MONEY is.. They make money..and save money by performing a bad operation on the donor who in many cases dies soon after and the \$5000,- or whatever amount flows back.

And since 'human rights' doesn't even appear in China's dictionaries the donor's family wont even receive any compensation..

Unfortunate..but NOT an accident. It's a bloody shame.

Posted by: Dorian | [September 02, 2009 at 05:34 PM](#)



re - Dorian; - "Its a bloody shame'

No ... Its worse.

It is a bloody disgrace.

It is also a shocking indication of our just how utterly selfish certain members of monied society are.

These clandestine organ transactions shows how these people believe that they are entitled to everything in life, - including good health, - even if it means that they are placing another person's life in danger, or that the other person, i.e. the donor, may die, which happened in this instance - and who knows how many other donors have died in the past?

Under these conditions - All human life is sacred, wether they are Jewish or not.

As a Jew who who believes and always strives to practice universal compassion and social justice as opposed to empty ritual, as is demanded by our Prophets, - I am appalled at this story and also ashamed of the fact that people who calls themselves Jews could be involved in something so sordid with so little regard for another human's life.

Posted by: L.Krawitz | [September 03, 2009 at 07:13 AM](#)



CNN is blocking my criticisms on their web page, so I might as well post here.

1. Of course its anti-Israeli. There are incidents of unethical kidney procurement taking place all over the world, but CNN, Nancy Sheper-Hughes, et al. are focused almost exclusively on Israel. Ghoulish organ swiping urban legend stories feed on each other for evidence of authenticity. This story will be used to give credence to the Swiss organ swiping story. Organ swiping urban legends always have a politically biased purpose, whether or not its premeditated. In the 80's Russia started anti-US organ swiping urban legends in Latin American and other developing countries. The most childish, ignorant tales you can imagine. Entertaining, and at the same time guaranteed to fuel anger against gringos. In the early 90's (I think it was) an American woman was beaten to death in Columbia by an angry mob certain that she was there to steal their children's organs and ship them back to the US.

2. You have to pause a second and look at CNN's reporting of this critically. Yes, I know the story's entertaining, but just think about it. There are undoubtably incidents of illegal payment in the US, and a greater occurrence of this unethical practice in developing countries, but they have absolutely no evidence to justify their claim that a vast black market exists in the US. They give a 1600 illegal transplants a year figure, and absolutely no evidence. Watch carefully. What they are presenting as established fact is friend of a friend innuendo, and other biased unsubstantiated claims. For instance, they have Nancy Sheper-Hughes on every night claiming ghoulish goings on. She's been promoting organ swiping urban legends for 15 years. She makes a living from this. In the 90's she, and the UN, were very busy promoting Latin American organ swiping stories as established fact. Another: note how they make no effort to verify that a young Chinese girl that supposedly gave the kidney actually existed, or died. China is not behind an iron curtain anymore. They verify nothing.

3. Jews in Israel and in the US promoting a libertarian "organ market" have only themselves to blame for how easily this is being twisted into anti-Israel propaganda. It was inevitable. Instead of focusing on creating a popularly supported altruistic donation system like in Spain, and some areas of the US, the medical community in Israel either ignored the need, or promoted the "organ market", claiming that regulation would make it ethical, safe, and fair, and that any public preception of ghoulishness was irrelevant. History and experience have proven that organ procurement can never succeed without the widest possible active support from the public. I'm constantly exasperated that seemingly no one stops to consider that there is a vast world wide experience with what works and what doesn't in organ procurement. Its as though people think that its brand new territory.

Posted by: Mike | [September 03, 2009 at 01:23 PM](#)



Israel needs to punish these outlaws with life imprisonment, imho.

Posted by: Chicago Sam | [February 12, 2010 at 01:29 PM](#)



Why is there any indignation about the sale of organs by living people, when it's OK to donate them

Posted by: generic viagra | [June 10, 2010 at 12:30 PM](#)

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