

OVADIA YOSEF RULES KIDNEY DONATIONS PERMISSIBLE, EVEN OBLIGATORY (Israeline 15/11/96)

Former Sephardic Chief Rabbi Ovadia Yosef published a Jewish-law ruling on Wednesday permitting those who can afford to spare a kidney to donate one to people in need of transplants, HA'ARETZ reported. The ruling, or Halacha, applies both to living donors and to those newly deceased, and designates organ donation a Mitzva -- a Jewish-law commandment. The new Halacha is being viewed as a breakthrough in the effort to involve the traditional and religious population in the practice of organ donation. According to HA'ARETZ, the new Halacha was issued in coordination with the efforts of former Health Minister Tzachi Hanegbi.