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## Organs removed in autopsies to be buried

By JUDY SIEGEL-ITZKOVICH

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Health Ministry promises to bury within three months, over 80,000 pieces of tissue and organs that have been stored for years.

Over 80,000 pieces of tissue and organs that have been stored for years after collection during autopsies at the L. Greenberg Institute for Forensic Medicine at Abu Kabir will be buried within three months, Health Ministry director-general Prof. Ronni Gamzu promised on Tuesday.

He was speaking before the Knesset Constitution, Law and Justice Committee, which held a session on a journalistic report that human tissue has been kept at the institute instead of being buried with the deceased from whom it was taken.

The families of the deceased did not know anything about this issue before the report appeared in a newspaper.

MKs Uri Maklev (United Torah Judaism) and Rachel Adatto (Kadima) continued the discussion, which they initiated at a committee session last month. Another session will be held with the participation of the attorney-general and the state attorney, who will report on regulations and directives for usage of tissue removed during autopsies.

Gamzu disclosed that he had decided to bring an end to the unfortunate situation.

"We will contact the families and inform them about the body parts at the institute and ask [the families] to have them buried," he said. "If in the future, there will be a need to keep preserved tissues, we will take a microscopic sample [histological block], except in special cases in which taking organs are ordered by a court."

State Attorney Moshe Lador said, "We have come a long way towards respecting the dead. Recently we have installed an MRI scanner meant to reduce the number of autopsies [significantly]. The subject is important and sensitive for the general public."

From now on, we will act in a sensitive and proper manner," Lador continued. "We must honor the dead but also find out the truth about the causes and factors in unnatural deaths."

The rabbi of the forensic institute, Ya'akov Roget, asked that the Religious Services Ministry be involved in the burials.

Adatto, a physician by profession, objected to the decision that the families must cover the cost of burying the human tissues. "Why should they have to pay? A family that did not request that the organs be preserved

should not have to be billed," she argued.

Maklev asked Lador and Gamzu to write a directive for cases which require autopsies, specifying the size of the operation and the length of time the tissues and organs should be stored.



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