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Organ transplants and potential donors rise

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Judy Siegel-Itzkovich , THE JERUSALEM POST

The number of organs donated for transplant has increased 62 percent during the first seven months of this year compared to the same period in 2007, according to Israel Transplant. The transplant coordinating center said on Monday that nearly 54% of families asked to donate their loved ones' organs agreed, compared to 45% in an average year.

A total of 146 people received 176 organs during the first seven months of 2008, compared to only 90 recipients of 98 organs during the same period last year. Some patients received several organs, such as a heart and two lungs, a liver and kidney or a kidney and pancreas.

Israel Transplant coordinator Tamar Ashkenazi attributed the favorable trend to the fact that 50,000 additional Israelis had signed up as potential donors with the ADI organization (www.health.gov.il/transplant) during the past six months. Of these, 43,000 have asked for the special form that gives the clergyman of their choice veto power over whether their organs are donated after their deaths. Others signed up in Aroma cafes and at special events.

Anyone over the age of 17 can become a potential organ donor by signing an ADI card.

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