

## Fetus With No Brain to Be Used in Transplants in Brazil

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Brazil's Federal Council of Medicine (CFM) approved this Wednesday a resolution that permits Brazilian physicians to use anencephalic fetuses for organ transplants.

With this resolution, doctors can orient families to continue pregnancies in order to donate the organs of anencephalic infants, the moment they are removed from their mothers' wombs.

According to Marco Antônio Becker, Vice-President of the CFM and rapporteur of the resolution, the chief organ that will be used is the heart.

And he emphasized that it is essential this organ be fully formed. "In cases in which pregnancy is interrupted, it will depend on the month of gestation.

But for transplants, the ideal is for pregnancy to continue through conclusion or at least until the organs are fully formed," he explained.

Becker also observed that, for the transplant to succeed, it must be done immediately after birth.

He stressed the importance of obtaining family approval for the transplant to be performed.

"Evidently, the legal guardians will have to authorize this act ahead of time. Without permission from the parents, nothing goes."

Another member of the Council, Edvar Araújo, also defended prior authorization by the parents.

"Prior authorization allows the teams to get ready for the transplant right after the birth."

According to Araújo, this procedure expedites the surgery and increases the chances of success.

The question of organ transplants is unrelated to the abortion issue that is being debated in the Federal Supreme Court (STF).

In Becker's view, they are two separate matters, although one is a consequence of the other.

"If the Supreme Court confirms the decision set out in the injunction order, it will corroborate this resolution, because, if a birth can be carried out ahead of time, why can't the organs be used for transplants?" he reasoned.

Transplants of organs from anencephalic fetuses will only be allowed after the resolution is published in the Official Federal Government Register.

In the meantime, physicians can begin orienting their patients as to the benefits that organ donations from these fetuses can bestow on other babies.

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