



Scientists have found that organ transplants can have unexpected consequences, including profound changes to one's personality and sexual preferences. In a study involving 47 participants, a whopping 89 percent reported personality changes following their surgery, the South China Morning Post reports, no matter what organ they had received. These changes included changes in the preferences for food, intimacy, and even professional pursuits. As detailed in a paper published in the journal *Transplantology* in January, a team of researchers from the University of Colorado found that a majority of participants reported changes in their personality, including "enhanced social and sexual adaptation," and "spiritual or religious episodes."

Six of the 47 participants reported changes in "sexual preferences." Some transplant recipients even reported that they'd taken on the memories of their organ donors — which sounds pretty far-fetched medically, but could certainly be evidence of these serious operations leading to profound cognitive and emotional turmoil. Not all changes described by the latest study's organ recipients were positive. A number of them also reported negative effects, including depression, anxiety, and sexual dysfunction. It's also possible that the changes could have a simpler explanation. "Many of these changes may have resulted from improvement in physical health following surgery rather than a transfer of personality from donor to recipient,"

University of Colorado assistant clinical professor and coauthor Mitch Liester told the SCMP. Then there's the small sample size of just 47 people. And the researchers also point out in their paper that the findings may have been due to "selection bias resulting from our recruitment of individuals to participate in a study that explicitly stated it was examining personality changes following organ transplants." "Individuals who have not experienced personality changes might

be less likely to participate in such a study," the paper reads. In other words, more research is needed — but the intriguing results do show that an organ transplant can rattle more than just a patient's physical body.

More on organ transplants: [Man Is Doing Well With Implanted Pig Heart, Doctors Say](#)