

The Continuum of Life Saving/Sustaining Treatments

Definition= techniques and procedures that artificially replace the function of vital organs, without which life cannot be sustained

- Examples
 - Replacement technologies
 - **Mechanical ventilation** – replaces pulmonary function
 - **Extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO)**- replaces cardiopulmonary functions
 - **Dialysis** – replaces kidney functions
 - Supportive technologies
 - **Left Ventricular Assist Device (LVAD)**- supports cardiac function
 - **Vasopressors**- medications that provide cardiac and circulatory support
 - General adjunctive therapies
 - **Antibiotics**
 - **Sedatives**
 - **Intravenous Fluids**
 - **Tube feeds vs Total parenteral nutrition**
 - Other
 - **CPR**

When can Muslims withdraw or withhold life support? A narrative review of Islamic juridical rulings

Afshan Mohiuddin^{a,b}, Mehrunisha Suleman^c, Shoaib Rasheed^d and Aasim I. Padela^{e,f}

Table 3. Conditions justifying the withdrawal of medical care.

Conditions justifying the withdrawal of medical care		Category of futility
Useless/futile care	IOMS, Muhammad bin Adam al-Kawthari	Imminent Demise
Terminal/Inevitable Death	OIC-IFA, Shaykh Jad al Haqq Ali al Haqq, Mufti Ebrahim Desai, Darul Uloom Zakariyya (respirator)	
Brain Death	IFC-MWL, OIC-IFA, IOMS, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Mufti Ebrahim Desai	Qualitative
Sickness gets out of hand, recovery happens to be tied to a miracle, and ever-increasing pain	Yusuf al-Qaradawi	
Loss of <i>idrāk</i> (Brain's ability to perceive)	ECFR	Physiologic or Qualitative
Worsens health	Ikram ul Haq	
Lack of personal or relative assets to support continuation	IFA-I	Imminent demise
No hope for cure	Ali Gomaa	

Table 4. Conditions justifying the withholding of medical care.

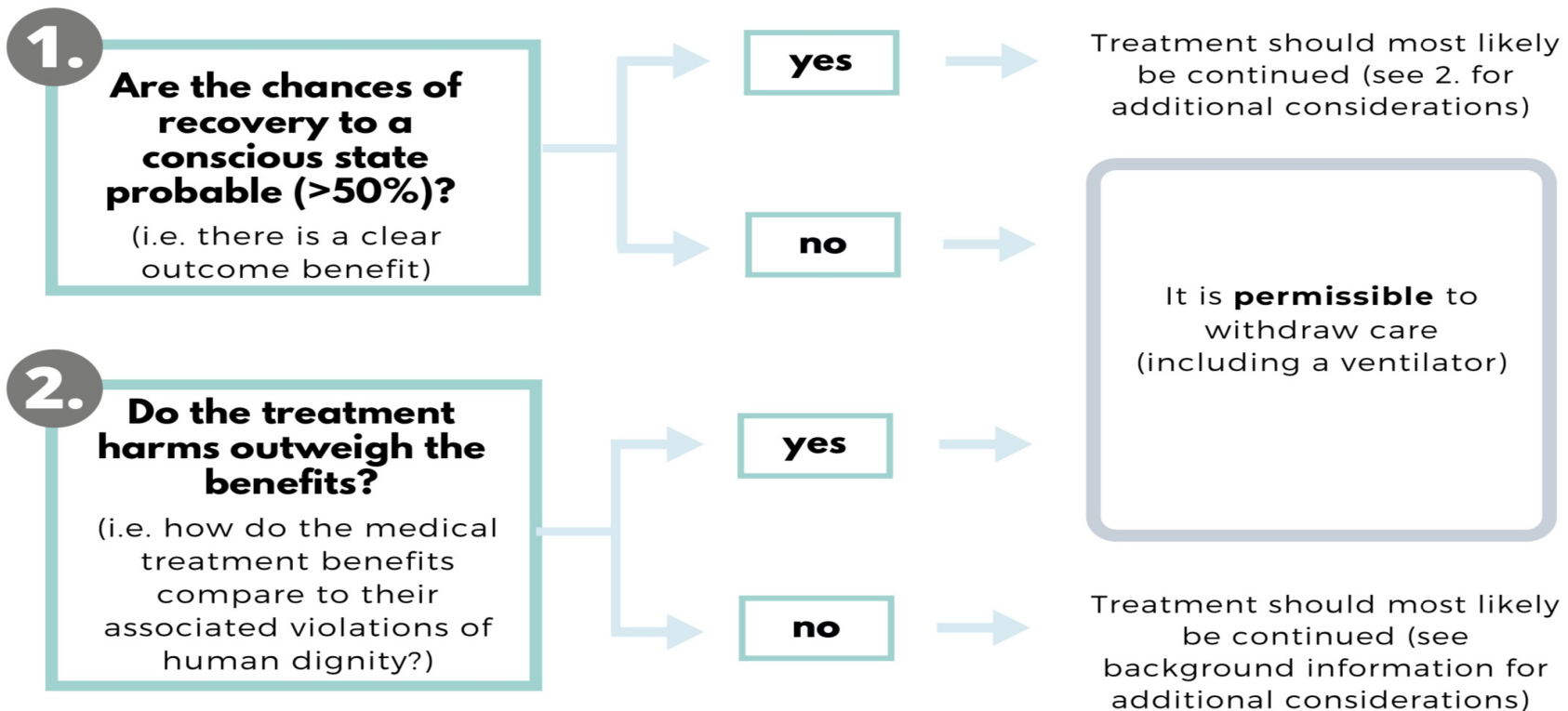
Conditions justifying the withholding of medical care		Category of futility
"Useless" care	IOMS, Yusuf al-Qaradawi	Imminent Demise/ Lethal Condition
Terminally ill/ No chance of survival	Madrasah In'aamiyyah, Jamiatul Ulama	
Patient unfit for resuscitation, illness unresponsive to treatment and death certain, incapacitated patient or state of mental inactivity, untreatable brain damage, resuscitation would be inappropriate/ineffective	Saudi Committee for <i>Fatwā</i> & Research (resuscitation)	Imminent Demise/ Lethal Condition

Obligation to initiate or continue life support ceases to exist

1. When the clinical state of a patient is such that medical care is "futile" (**harms >> benefit**)
2. When individuals have "brain dead physiology" (**no outcome benefit**)

→ Assessing QOL as *mukallaf* potential for determining goals-of-care

AS A PATIENT OR FAMILY MEMBER, IS IT PERMISSIBLE TO WITHDRAW LIFE SUSTAINING TREATMENT?



Death Constructs: A Fusion of Facts & Values & Behaviors



Death Criteria

How is death determined in healthcare?

- Circulatory criteria
- Neurological criteria
 - Loss of *critical* brain functions
 - Irreversible
 - **Prognostic tool**

How is death conceived of in Islam?

- Theology:
 - Removal of soul from the body
- Law:
 - Indicators of bodily incapacity to carry out functions of soul
 - No circulation/respiration
 - Inclination of the nose
 - Sinking of the temples

COMA VS “BRAIN DEATH”

Coma

- Depressed alertness, attention & consciousness (can't be woken up)
- Spontaneous breathing
- Brain stem reflexes: present

Coma can result in:

1. Recovery
2. Vegetative state or Minimally conscious state

Neurological criteria for death

- Apnea: no spontaneous breathing (ventilator dependent)
- Brain stem reflexes: Absent
- Some reflexive motor responses might occur

Generally diagnosed by two independent physicians at two different time points

→ Usually results in cardiac arrest

Islamic juridical councils on brain death

bioethics

Bioethics ISSN 0269-9702 (print); 1467-8519 (online)



doi:10.1111/j.1467-8519.2011.01935.x

BRAIN DEATH IN ISLAMIC ETHICO-LEGAL DELIBERATION: CHALLENGES FOR APPLIED ISLAMIC BIOETHICS

AASIM I. PADELA, AHSAN AROZULLAH AND EBRAHIM MOOSA

Year	Juridical Body	Endorsed Brain Death as
		• Legal Death (LD) • Unstable Life (UL)
1981	Religious Rulings Committee of Kuwait	Brain death is NOT legal death
1982	Senior Religious Scholars Commission in Saudi Arabia	Yes, LD
1985	IOMS	Yes, UL
1987	Council of Islamic Jurisprudence of Muslim World League	Yes, UL
1988	OIC-IFA	Yes, LD
1994	Majlis al-Shura al-Islami, South Africa	Yes, LD
1994	Majlis al-Ulama, South Africa	BD person is alive
1995	United Kingdom Muslim Law Council	Yes, LD
1996	Indonesian Council of Ulama	Yes but unclear



knowledge changing life

Exemplar Verdicts on Brain Death

OIC-IFA – BD is Legal Death

- all **vital** functions of brain cease **irreversibly** and the **brain has started to degenerate**

IOMS – unstable life

- “if a person has reached brain-stem death ***some of the rulings of unstable life*** apply”
- Withdrawal of life support is permitted
- Organ Donation is not
- Death declared at cardiac cessation

Theological Ethics of End-of-life Healthcare

- Prepare for death
 - Have a good hope in Allah [swt]
 - Set affairs in order
 - Follow the Prophetic example
- Decisions about treatment & interventions
 - Reflect on benefit & harm in light of
 - Honoring Sanctity (*karāmah; takrīm*)
 - Preserving inviolability of the body (*ḥurmah; tahrīm*)
 - Preserving mere physiological life is not a worthy goal in and of itself
 - ‘Quality of life’ is tied to the ability to effect good works



Speak Up

Start the conversation
about end-of-life care



knowledge changing life