

HELSINKI FACE TRANSPLANTATION CENTER

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Finland

EU country

Population 5.5 M

Health care

- Tax funded
- Highly centralized



Organ transplantations in Finland

- National Solid Organ Tx center in Helsinki
- National OPO
- National VCA center (face, hand, other)
- 2 Face Tx (2016,2018) & Upper extremity Tx patient listed

Helsinki Face Tx center

- Program building
- Patient evaluation
- Treatment
- Follow-up

Transplantation team

- Transplantation surgeons
- Immunologists
- Infectious disease specialists
- Psychiatrist, psychologists
- Rejection pathologists
- Internal medicine specialists
- Transplantation coordinator

H&N team

- Radiologists
- Dental specialists
- Oral physiotherapist
- Physiotherapist
- Speech therapist
- Nutritional therapist
- Social worker

Surgical team

- Plastic surgeons
- Maxillofacial surgeons
- ENT surgeons
- Anesthesiologists
- Nurses

Funding

- VCA's funded by normal health care in Finland
 - considered as experimental care under standard health care
- Treatment has to be funded for the patient for the rest of their life

Patient selection process

Key to success = patient selection

1. Indications for face transplantation

Facial deficiency with loss of function that can not be reconstructed conventionally

Or a severe loss of normal facial structures

2. Contraindications

- Absolute

- Noncompliance
- Nonability to continue immunosuppression or follow-up
- Active cancer
- Psychiatric lability
- Severe chronic illness
- Age <18 or >65

- Relative

- Smoking
- Substance abuse
- Chronic illnesses

3. Psychological evaluation

- Structural analysis and written summary
- Compliance
- Patient needs to understand the procedure

4. Quality of life

Decrease in the QOL
Patient's decision

Goals

Patient evaluation & measurement of success

1. To correct disfigured anatomy
2. To return missing function
3. To restore normal appearance
4. To improve life and well-being
5. To avoid harm from the treatment

*Sipilä M, Kiukas E-L, Lindford A, Ylä-Kotola T, Lauronen J, Sintonen H, Lassus P (2021):
The four category systematic approach for selecting patients for face transplantation
Journal of Plastic Surgery and Hand Surgery, DOI:10.1080/2000656X.2021.1933995*

Immunosuppression

Thymoglobulin

1. Tacrolimus

2. CellCept

3. Medrol

Registry



If two registries
they need to be able
to share data