

*In the news – International*

## Michael Podolsky: The First ALS Patient Under End-of-Life Care Donates Organs

Poonam Sharma, Sujatha Suriyamoorthi  
MOHAN Foundation, India

Michael Podolsky, a 44-year-old Israeli man living with advanced amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), died on September 25 at Sheba Medical Center after a Tel Aviv District Court approved his request to reduce life-sustaining treatment. His death marked a rare legal and ethical milestone in Israel: Podolsky became the first publicly named ALS patient in nearly three decades to secure judicial permission to limit ventilation, and the first to donate organs under such circumstances.

Euthanasia and assisted dying are banned in Israel, but the Dying Patient Law of 2005 allows patients to refuse life-prolonging treatment through advance directives. Podolsky, who had been on a mechanical ventilator for nearly three years and could communicate only through eye movements, argued that continued ventilation amounted to prolonged suffering.

In a rare move, Judge Amir Lukashinsky-Gal personally visited Podolsky to confirm his wishes and allowed doctors to sedate him and gradually lower oxygen levels.

After his death, Podolsky's kidneys were successfully transplanted into two recipients. Tamar Ashkenazi, head of the Israel Transplant Center, said organ donation gave him comfort in his final days. His case has renewed debate on end-of-life rights in Israel, highlighting the tension between law, medicine and compassion for patients with incurable diseases.

**Corresponding Author:** Dr. Sunil Shroff,  
MOHAN Foundation, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India  
**Email:** shroff@mohanfoundation.org

**To cite :** Sharma P, Suriyamoorthi S. Michael Podolsky: The First ALS Patient Under End-of-Life Care Donates Organs. In the news. Indian Transplant Newsletter. 2025 Oct-Dec; 24(4):p2. DOI: 10.64384/ITN.2025.058

