

Foundations of Mindfulness

The *buddhalakṣaṇa* ‘characteristics of the Buddha’ outlined in the article by Levman in this issue may be seen in the context of the 32 body parts as object of meditation in the *mahāsatipaṭṭhāna sutta* ‘Foundations of Mindfulness Discourse’ of the Pali Canon (DN, xxii.5) (see Nyanaponika Thera, *The Heart of Buddhist Meditation*, 1954, Samuel Weiser, for a discussion):

There are in this body head hair, body hair, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, pleura, spleen, lungs, intestines, mesentery, stomach, feces, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, grease, saliva, mucus, synovial fluid and urine [and brain*].

*‘Brain in the skull,’ added later, makes up the 32nd part.

*atthi imasmiṃ kāye kesā lomā nakhā dantā taco maṃsaṃ
nahāru atthi atthiminjā vakkam hadayaṃ yakanam kilomakam
pihakam papphāsam antam antagunam udariyam karisaṃ
pittam semham pubbo lohitaṃ sedo medo assu vasā khelo
singānikā lasikā muttan ti*.*

*Later addition: ... *matthake matthalungaṃ*.

The meditator comes to this ‘reflection on the Repulsiveness of the Body’ as part of the ‘Contemplation of the Body’ beginning with the breath. For details of the meditative practice, see *The Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga)*, by Buddhaghosa, ch. VIII, 8.

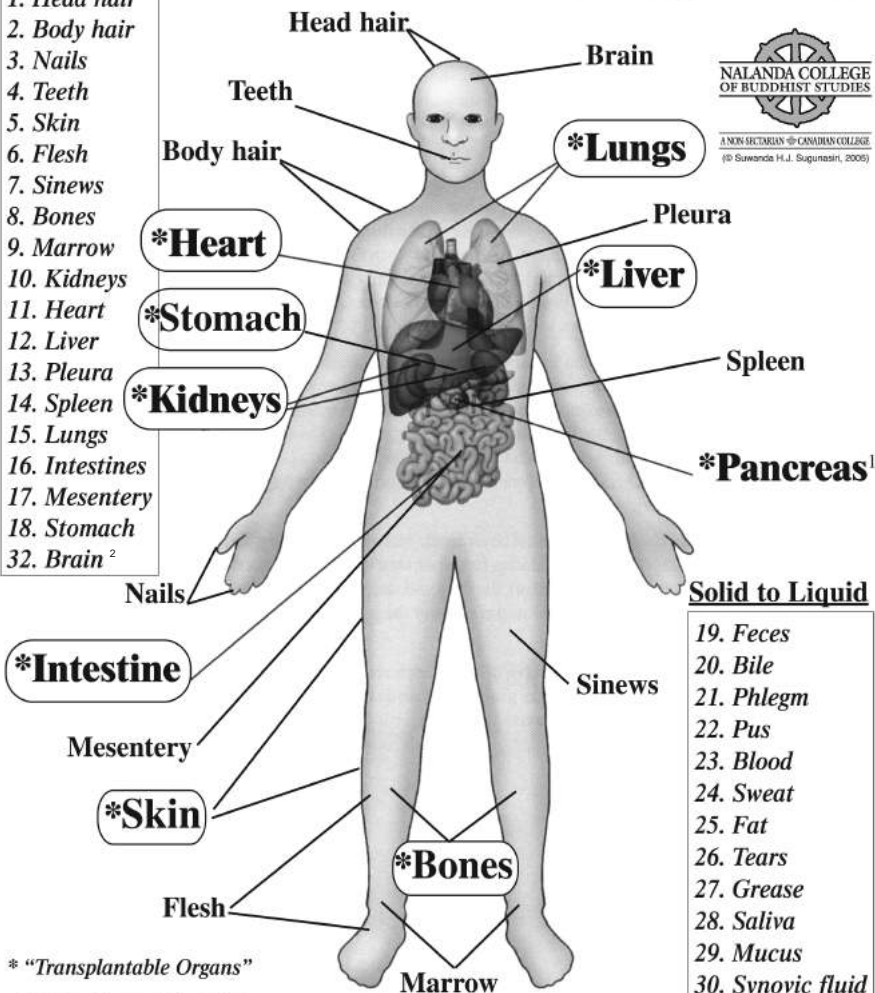
On the opposite page is a visual representation of the 32 body parts (excerpted from Commemorative Souvenir, 100 years of Buddhism in Canada, NCBS, 2005, p.22), originally developed (by Suwanda H. J. Sugunasiri) as a visual aid in relation to *aṅga dāna* ‘organ donation’.

The Human Body (the 32 parts)- Buddha's Analysis, 543 B.C.E.

(Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta)

Solid

1. Head hair
2. Body hair
3. Nails
4. Teeth
5. Skin
6. Flesh
7. Sinews
8. Bones
9. Marrow
10. Kidneys
11. Heart
12. Liver
13. Pleura
14. Spleen
15. Lungs
16. Intestines
17. Mesentery
18. Stomach
32. Brain²



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Solid to Liquid

19. Feces
20. Bile
21. Phlegm
22. Pus
23. Blood
24. Sweat
25. Fat
26. Tears
27. Grease
28. Saliva
29. Mucus
30. Synovial fluid
31. Urine

* "Transplantable Organs"

¹ Not in the Buddha's list

² Not in the original text