

# Idiom by Lon Yan

## 狼心狗肺

*lang2 xin1 gou3 fei4*

Scientists have successfully removed threatening viruses from the pig's DNA, getting us one step closer to using pig organs for human transplant.

Science may one day make it possible to use all kinds of animal organs for transplanting into human bodies, such as the heart of the wolf, or the lungs of dogs. There is actually an idiom about these animal organs - “狼心狗肺” (*lang2 xin1 gou3 fei4*), but it is hardly the flattering kind.

“狼” (*lang2*) is “a wolf,” “心” (*xin1*) “the heart,” “狗” (*gou3*) “a dog” and “肺” (*fei4*) “the lung.” “狼心狗肺” (*lang2 xin1 gou3 fei4*), literally, is heart of wolf and lungs of dog.

The idiom has no medical relevance. It means “as cruel as a wolf,” “cruel and unscrupulous.” It is used to call people who are “ungrateful and heartless,” “cruel and

unscrupulous.” But we only call people “狼心狗肺” (*lang2 xin1 gou3 fei4*) when they are seriously bad.

Another idiom that refers to an animal body part is “人頭豬腦” (*ren2 tou2 zhu1 nao3*) – literally “human head, pig’s brain.” Pigs are actually quite intelligent, but due to their unassuming looks, people think they are stupid. So “人頭豬腦” (*ren2 tou2 zhu1 nao3*) means, figuratively, “stupid.”

When people say “人頭豬腦” (*ren2 tou2 zhu1 nao3*) to others, it is like calling them “You are an idiot!”

While transplanting a pig’s brain into a human being would probably never happen, we should nonetheless start paying more respect to animals, knowing their organs could one day save our lives!

### Terms containing the character “狗” (*gou3*) include:

小狗 (*xiao3 gou3*) – a puppy

走狗 (*zou3 gou3*) – a stooge; a servile follower

狗肉 (*gou3 rou4*) – dog meat

狗吠 (*gou3 fei4*) – bark