



# How to donate your body to medical science



Regulated and licensed by the Human Tissue Authority (HTA)

## Information and instructions

Dear potential donor

Thank you for expressing your wish to bequeath your body for anatomical examination after death: your generous action is greatly appreciated.

Donated bodies may be used for:

- Anatomical examination
- Education or training relating to human health
- Research in connection with disorders, or the functioning of the human body

Please note that donated bodies are not used for research into specific diseases and organs will not be donated for transplantation.

If you wish to proceed with the body donation programme you should sign the enclosed forms in duplicate. Both potential donor and witness must sign and date the forms at the same time; otherwise it will not provide valid consent for acceptance of your body for Anatomical Examination, Education, Training and Research.

One copy of the completed form should be returned to this University and the other copy retained with your Will or personal papers.

Having power of attorney does not qualify you to make the decision to donate a body on someone else's behalf.

It is advisable to inform your relatives, executor and doctor of your intention. Your executor or next of kin should telephone this Medical School as soon as possible after the death occurs. If the bequest is accepted (and it may not be possible to do so) the undertaker employed by this Medical School will be instructed to make all the arrangements for removal. If your address is outside the 25 mile radius of Liverpool, the executor will be requested to pay the extra transportation costs involved.

The death must be registered with a local Registrar from whom a Certificate of Burial or Cremation (Green Form) and a Certificate of Registration of Death should be obtained.

This Medical School is closed on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays. There is a voice mail system at the office and relatives should leave their name and telephone number as a recorded message so that we can deal with it promptly. The offer of the bequest will be considered immediately the office re-opens.

If the body lies in a hospital he/she should be held under refrigerated conditions in the hospital mortuary or funeral directors until the office re-opens and we can deal with the donation. The maximum time for holding is dependent on the refrigeration. If the body is at home or at a nursing home it should be removed to a Chapel of Rest by an undertaker, and held under refrigerated conditions if possible. If the deceased has to be taken to an undertaker's premises it is important for the relatives to understand that the transport and the cost of the undertaker must be borne by the next of kin or the donor's estate. The Medical School pays for everything else once the bequeathal has been accepted.

During the major public holidays at Christmas, New Year and Easter this Medical School is closed, and as such is unable to accept bodies. During these times, next of kin are advised to make arrangements for a funeral.

The University will be responsible for the examination and preservation of a body until such time as cremation is required. A service will be conducted and relatives and friends may attend. All cremation expenses will be borne by this Medical School. The next of kin may also take possession of the ashes.

At the time at which the donation of your body is accepted, the next of kin or executors may request that there should be a private burial or cremation. In such circumstances all expenses involved in such arrangements become the responsibility of the next of kin or executors.

**No guarantee can be given that a bequest will be accepted.** Among other considerations, the cause of death itself or a post mortem examination could have made the body unsuitable for anatomical examination, the object of which is the study of the normal structure of the body. If the bequeathal cannot be accepted, responsibility for burial or cremation rests with the executors or next of kin.

There is no upper age limit for bequeathing a body but donors must be over seventeen years old.

**Although not exhaustive, the following is a guide to some reasons for *not* accepting a bequest:**

- **Post mortem examination**
- **Widespread Cancer**
- **Infectious disease:** e.g. Viral Hepatitis, HIV, Septicaemia, and MRSA.
- **Some forms of Dementia**
- **Jaundice:** of infective origin.
- **MS (Multiple Sclerosis):** Depending on the severity of the condition, cases of MS may or may not be suitable. If you wish to donate your brain for research into MS please contact the MS Tissue Bank on 020 7594 9734.
- **Bedsores or varicose ulcers:** The Doctor or Nurse will be asked about the state of the donor's skin, and in particular about the presence of bedsores. Small sores may be acceptable, but deep sores are not.
- **Peripheral vascular disease:** Severe vascular disease of the limbs and severe diabetes with evidence of vascular disease would be unacceptable.
- **Recent operations:** Where the wound has not healed (usually within 12 weeks of an operation).
- **Gross Peripheral oedema**
- **Arthritic deformity:** Severe deformity of joints and spine.
- **Obesity:** Excessive weight in proportion to height.
- **If organs, other than corneas, have been donated for transplantation or medical research.**
- **Aortic Aneurysm.**
- **On occasion the mortuary facility may be fully occupied.**

If the body is not suitable for anatomical examination the relatives or executors will be informed as soon as possible so they may make funeral arrangements.

## Notes for completing the forms

**Please read this section carefully as it explains what you may give consent for.**

There is no limit on the length of time a donated body can be used by the receiving institution. However if you wish to restrict the time that your body is used, you have an opportunity to do so in Section 2 of the consent form.

It may be useful for The University of Liverpool to prepare images of parts of your body for teaching, training or research purposes. You are assured that if consent is given to prepare images you will not be identifiable in these images.

Complete both forms ensuring they are signed and dated in the presence of your witness. Return one copy to the address below and keep the other with your Will or legal papers.

A witness can be a person of your choosing, including your spouse, next of kin, executor, solicitor, G.P, friend, neighbour etc.

Please post your completed form to:  
Miss Dee Tully  
The University of Liverpool Bequeathal Office  
Human Anatomy Resource Centre  
Sherrington Building  
Ashton Street  
Liverpool  
L69 3GE

Tel: 0151 794 5442  
Fax: 0151 794 5462  
Email: [dmtully@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:dmtully@liverpool.ac.uk) or  
[body-donation@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:body-donation@liverpool.ac.uk)

Or you can visit us at [www.liv.ac.uk/harc](http://www.liv.ac.uk/harc)

## **Instructions to next of kin or executors when donor dies**

You should read the previous information carefully and then telephone The University of Liverpool on **0151 794 5442**. This Medical School will contact the doctor in charge of the deceased and together they will make a decision on whether or not the bequeathal donation is acceptable. You will be informed within a short time about the decision.

### **If the offer of Bequeathal is accepted:**

1. Register the death with the Registrar and tell him/her of the wishes of the deceased. He/she will issue you with a **green form** (Certificate of Burial or Cremation) and a **Death Certificate**. Please ensure these documents are taken to where the deceased is, our undertakers cannot collect the donor without them.
2. You will then be sent a **yellow form** (HTA1) or a **green form** (HTA2) an Application for Cremation form and an Instruction for Cremation form. This calls for a final decision on cremation arrangements. Please return these forms with a copy of the Death Certificate (if not already provided) to this office as soon as possible.
3. If the deceased has had to be maintained at an undertakers prior to acceptance the cost will be borne by the estate of the deceased. This Medical School only pays from the time its undertaker takes charge of the deceased.
4. At their request, families can attend the committal service at the crematorium and they can also have the ashes returned to them.

### **If an offer of Bequeathal is not accepted:**

Proceed with normal arrangements for burial or cremation. It is with regret that this Medical School cannot make any financial contribution to these private arrangements.

## Frequently asked questions about body donation.

### If I choose to donate my body, what can it be used for?

With your consent, your donated body can be used for a number of possible uses:

1. “Anatomical examination” – this term describes the teaching of the structure and function of the human body to students or healthcare professionals.
2. “Research” – this term describes scientific studies which improve the understanding of the human body.
3. “Education and training” – these terms describe the training of healthcare professionals, usually those learning surgical techniques, as opposed to anatomical examination.

### What do I need to do in order to donate my body?

Under the Human Tissue Act, written consent must be given prior to death; consent cannot be given by anyone else after your death. A consent form can be obtained from your local medical school and a copy should be kept in your will. You should also inform your family, close friends and GP that you wish to donate your body.

### I have recently moved to a different part of the country. Will I need to fill in a new body donation consent form?

Not necessarily. A form completed for one anatomy establishment might also be acceptable to another. More details can be obtained directly from the anatomy establishment to which you wish to donate your body.

If you have moved to a new area of the country, but still want to donate your body to the anatomy establishment linked to your old post code, please contact the establishment for more details. Some medical schools may request that your estate contributes to the cost of transporting your body if the donation falls outside of the medical school's local area.

### Can I donate my body if I am also on the organ transplant donor register?

People who choose to donate their body or organs do so in the hope

that they will be useful to others after their death. Despite being separate donation systems, it is possible for a person to be registered as an organ donor and to have registered their wish to donate their body, after death, to a medical school.

Medical schools will usually decline a body donation if the person has undergone surgery to remove organs for transplantation. However, if after their death, the person is found unsuitable to be an organ donor, then body donation to a medical school can be taken forward by the relatives, solicitor or executor of the will.

If a person wishes to register for both organ donation and body donation, the HTA suggests that the person includes this in their will and ensures that those closest to them are aware of their wishes.

The organ donation register is run by [NHS Blood and Transplant](#): 0845 6060400

[www.nhsbt.nhs.uk/](http://www.nhsbt.nhs.uk/)

You can donate the corneas of your eyes and still donate your body for anatomical examination. For a donor card please contact the Organ Donor Register on 0845 6060400, or the Royal Liverpool University Hospital on 0151 709 0141.

[Are there any costs or payments involved?](#)

You will not receive any payment for donating your body.

[I signed a body donation consent form 10 years ago and recently heard that a new law, affecting body donation, came into force in 2006. Will the consent form I originally signed be accepted when I die or must I complete a new form?](#)

Although the new law affecting body donation (the Human Tissue Act 2004) came into force on 1 September 2006, it allows documented and valid consent for body donation made under the old law to be honored. To avoid any unnecessary confusion or delays after you die, it is recommended that you include an updated intention to donate your body in your Will. More details can be obtained directly from the anatomy establishment to which you wish to donate your body.

[Can I donate my body to a specific cause or medical school?](#)

Medical schools which accept donated bodies will normally only accept donations from within their local area due to the transport costs involved. Offers of body donation from outside the area may be accepted on the



condition that the donor's estate bears the cost of transporting the body. Alternatively, the following human tissue banks accept brain and spinal tissue for research into specific medical conditions. As well as needing particular types of tissue from people with the conditions named below, they also accept donations of brain and spinal tissue from people without these conditions.

## **USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS**

**Brains for Dementia Research Co-ordinating Centre** Tel: 020 7848 8377

Email [bdr.office@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:bdr.office@kcl.ac.uk)

[www.brainsfordementiaresearch.org.uk](http://www.brainsfordementiaresearch.org.uk)

**Multiple Sclerosis (MS Society) Tissue Bank**

Tel: 020 7594 9734

Tel for outside office hours: 07659 132045

**Parkinson's Disease Tissue Bank**

Tel: 020 7594 9732

Tel for outside office hours: 07659 104537

[pdbank@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:pdbank@imperial.ac.uk)

**The Human Tissue Authority**

151 Buckingham Palace Road

Victoria

London

SW1W 9SZ

Tel: 020 7269 1900

[enquiries@hta.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@hta.gov.uk)

## NOTES

The University of Liverpool  
Bequeathal Office  
Human Anatomy Resource Centre  
Sherrington Building  
Ashton Street  
Liverpool  
L69 3GE