

INFORMATION ON DONATING YOUR BODY FOR ANATOMICAL EXAMINATION

And instructions for the next of kin

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A message from the Anatomy team

Thank you for your interest in bequeathing your body to us after your death; your generous action is greatly appreciated and could benefit a great many healthcare professionals.

Detailed instructions are enclosed. It is important that you understand all the information before signing and returning a bequest form. If you have any questions, please contact us on the above telephone number or email address.

This booklet has been designed using guidance given by the government regulatory body, The Human Tissue Authority (HTA). For more information on the HTA, you can visit the website:

www.hta.gov.uk and click on the "Donating your body to medical science" link

May we also express our hope that it will be many years before your wishes have to be considered.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Thank you for expressing your wish to bequeath your body to us after death. We have a continuing need for generous individuals to bequeath their bodies for anatomical examination for the purposes of teaching, training and research in Medicine and Healthcare Sciences.

Donations may be used for one or more of the following purposes:

Education

Your body will be used to study the structure and form of the human body. This benefits medical students and students on related healthcare courses and healthcare professionals.

Training

Healthcare professionals gain great benefit from the opportunity to develop surgical skills and other clinical procedures on the body.

Research

Students undertaking research projects within the MBBS course or as an intercalated Masters in Clinical Research will use your body to develop new strategies and clinical or surgical procedures. In addition, your body may be used to develop new surgical techniques and procedures.

All activities carried out are supervised by a member of staff and in accordance with the Human Tissue Act 2004

Donations are accepted for either our undergraduate programmes or our postgraduate courses. Acceptance criteria is more flexible for our postgraduate programmes but these run more infrequently.

Once a donation has been accepted into the Anatomy department, the department will take responsibility for costs incurred following the acceptance (from when our contracted funeral directors collect the remains. This includes the cost of our standard cremation, memorial service and ash scattering at Colney Wood. Other arrangements can be made if you wish, however these will need to be made by your next of kin or executor and any additional costs incurred will need to be met by your estate.

If the donation is not accepted a funeral will need to be arranged and the Norwich Medical School will have no further involvement.

A decision on whether a donation will be accepted will only be made once a potential donor has passed away.

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2. COMPLETING THE BEQUEST FORMS

If you do decide that you wish to bequeath your body to us after your death please fill in the bequest form in the presence of a witness and return it to the address on the front of this booklet. We will send you a photocopy back for you to keep with your Will or legal papers.

Why do I need to fill in these forms?

Human bodies or parts cannot be bought or sold. Likewise they cannot be “Owned” by anyone and therefore cannot be given away by someone else following your death. However you can express a wish during your life for your body to be used for teaching, training and research or to donate your organs following your death. This wish must be witnessed by a friend, relative or professional person that understands your wishes and is happy to act as a witness.

Should I put a restriction on how long parts of my body may be kept for?

Sometimes we come across interesting or unusual anatomical features or may just find an excellent example for teaching. It is extremely useful for us to be able to keep these parts to use for teaching after your body has been cremated.

Why should I allow images of my body or parts to be taken?

Photographic images will always be anonymised and treated with the same respect and dignity as your body. Images are an incredibly useful resource for teaching. They are stored in a secure area can be used by anatomy teachers for reference in lectures and seminars. They are particularly useful if you decide not to allow parts to be retained as this enables us to keep accurate records and use them for teaching following cremation of your body.

Can I choose to be buried rather than cremated?

We cannot offer burial as an option due to the nature of the plot we hold in Colney Woods. If that is your wish to be buried, the additional costs and organisation of the burial will fall to your estate.

Can I donate my organs and my body?

If you have an organ donation card and wish to remain on the organ donor register, this will always take priority over donations for anatomical examination. However, we usually find that most donations offered to us are in an age bracket that falls outside the acceptable criteria for organ donation.

Organ donation is generally not compatible with body donation although we may be able to accept your bequest following corneal (eye) donations.

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Brain donation for research such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease is not compatible with whole body donation.

For an organ donor card please contact the organ donor register on **0300 123 23 23**.

For information on donating your brain please contact The Parkinson's UK Brain Bank on **020 7594 9732** or brainbank@imperial.ac.uk, or The Alzheimer's Society on **0300 2221 122**

What happens at the time of cremation?

Each year a non-denominational memorial service and ash scattering is held at Colney Wood for students and staff to express their gratitude to those that have generously donated their bodies to further the training of our future healthcare providers. Relatives of the donors are welcome to attend. The department will keep in touch by post with the next of kin or executor to inform them of when the memorial service and ash scattering will be.

If your wishes or those of your next of kin or executor are for a private cremation or burial to be arranged we will advise at to when anatomical examination will finish so that they can arrange this. In these circumstances responsibility for all expenses incurred that exceed the cost of our standard cremation will fall with the estate.

At the request of the family or executor, your ashes can be returned to them locally, normally at no extra cost to the estate. We can arrange for ashes to be couriered to other areas within England and Wales at an additional cost to the estate.

What if I move?

If you move within our catchment area (Norfolk and North Suffolk), please inform us of your change of address. If you move out of our catchment area, let us know and we will identify your nearest institution and pass on your donation form on to them. Bequest forms are transferrable between institutions.

Do I need to do anything else?

By filling in a donation form, you are expressing a wish for your body to be used for teaching, training and research. Relatives seldom fail to carry out this wish, however, you should discuss your wishes with your relatives before bequeathing your body. Make sure that your next of kin or executor are aware of your wish and have access to this booklet for instructions following your passing.

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Part A

Must be completed by the person wishing to bequest their body or by the representative of the donor if the donor is not able to fill their own form out (*Donations made on behalf of a donor must be made on the appropriate form, please contact us if you require this form*).

Please tick either option 1 or 2 to specify whether you wish to put a restriction on the length of time that the Medical School can use your donation.

If you have no wish to specify a limit to the amount of time that the Medical School can use your body or parts for teaching please tick option 1.

If you prefer that your body only be used for 3 years after donation please tick option 2. Tick box **a** if you are happy for any useful parts to be retained following cremation of your body or box **b** if you would prefer that your whole body is cremated and no parts are retained.

Ticking option 3 allows us to retain non-identifiable images to use in the future for teaching, training and research. If you would prefer for us not to keep images, please leave this box blank.

Option 4 informs us of your wishes following the end of your time with the department.

Part B

It is essential that your wish to bequeath your body is witnessed and that the witness signs the form at the time as you to confirm that they have witnessed that this is your wish.

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3. DONATION OFFERS

Will my donation definitely be accepted?

In order for us to consider a donation offer, there must be evidence of relevant consent. If there is no evidence of consent we will be unable to proceed with our enquiries. Forms that are not filled in correctly may cause problems in processing of a donation offer and may lead to the offer not being accepted. If we identify an error on your form, we will return it to you with an explanation of the error and a means for you to correct the error and return the form to us.

A decision on whether we are able to accept an offer is made at the time someone passes away. We will speak to your GP or Doctor to ascertain whether there is anything medically or physically that would prevent us from accepting the donation offer before making our final decision. Some common reasons are listed below.

In order to preserve the remains in a dignified manner we cannot accept a donation where there is damage to the skin or underlying disease that will reduce the effectiveness of our preservation process. Therefore we are not able to accept donations offered for our undergraduate programmes if:

- A post mortem has been carried out or organs (except corneas) have been donated.
- Large bed sores or varicose ulcers are present (small bedsores may be acceptable)
- There is a surgical wound that has not yet healed
- Severe peripheral vascular disease is present (diabetes with evidence of vascular disease may be unacceptable)
- There is an artificial stoma (ileostomy, colostomy, gastrostomy)
- Severe oedema (swelling of the limbs due to fluid retention) is present
- Severe jaundice at the time of death (as this reacts with our preservation chemicals)

To ensure that those undertaking the anatomical examination can do so in the safest way possible we are not able to accept donations offered for our undergraduate programmes if:

- There is evidence or history of a transmissible disease (HIV, hepatitis, septicaemia, tuberculosis).
- There is evidence or history of Alzheimer's disease / Senile dementia (unless we can be sure that dementia has not been caused by prion disease).

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- The potential donor is obese (although we do have lifting equipment, staff will still have to manoeuvre the remains which becomes a manual handling problem if the individual is very large).
- Recent chemotherapy treatment has been given

To ensure that we fulfil our teaching commitments we are not able to accept donations offered for our undergraduate programmes if:

- There is amputation of a major segment of one or more of the limbs
- The potential donor is very emaciated or malnourished
- There is extensive malignant disease (secondary malignant tumours and some primary malignant tumours).

Criteria for our postgraduate courses is more flexible (for example an orthopaedics course would not be concerned about extensive metastatic spread). We would, however not be able to accept a donation offer if:

- There is evidence or history of a transmissible disease (HIV, hepatitis, septicaemia, tuberculosis).
- There is evidence or history of Alzheimer's disease / Senile dementia (unless we can be sure that dementia has not been caused by prion disease).
- Recent chemotherapy treatment has been given
- The potential donor is very morbidly obese.

Donations will be accepted under the above criteria only if we have a requirement for a particular course.

Regretfully we sometimes have to turn down donations for logistical reasons. The Anatomy department at UEA is small, therefore we are restricted in the number of donations we can accept. In these cases we will always contact another nearby institution to endeavour to follow the wishes of the donor.

If you are concerned that you have a medical condition that would prevent us accepting the offer, please contact us and we will be happy to discuss it with you.

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What happens if my donation offer is not accepted?

We will always try to accept a donation offer where possible.

If we are unable to accept an offer due to logistical reasons we will attempt to identify another institution that is able to process your offer and pass all relevant information on to them.

If we are unable to accept your donation offer on medical grounds it is highly unlikely that other institutions would be able to accept the offer. In these cases we will advise that normal funeral arrangements would need to be put in place by the next of kin or executor. Unhappily if the donation offer is not accepted, UEA cannot offer any remuneration towards costs incurred for funeral arrangements.

4. DATA PROTECTION

Details of potential donors (who have requested a donation pack) who do not return bequest forms will be destroyed after 1 year or sooner on request.

Details of donors returning completed bequest forms will be kept indefinitely unless requested otherwise.

Details of accepted donors will be kept indefinitely.

Some anonymised details of rejected donations will be kept indefinitely for statistical purposes.

All personal data will be kept securely within the anatomy department at the university and will not be shared with third parties not involved in the donation process.

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5. GUIDANCE FOR THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BODY AFTER DEATH OF THE DONOR

When somebody dies

Donation of remains for anatomical examination is not as urgent as donation of organs. You can notify us of the passing of a potential donor on the next working day (we cannot process donations outside of office hours). **Please contact us by telephone in office hours to inform us of the death on 01603 591104.** If there is no answer, your call will be directed to the Norwich Medical School Reception who will take a message. We will return your enquiry as quickly as we can.

The office is closed between 5pm and 8.30am. If the person you are calling about has died outside of these hours and you need further help that cannot wait until the next working day please ring 07768 428461.

It is preferable for the remains of the deceased to be moved either to a chapel of rest or hospital mortuary. If the person you are calling about has died in hospital, their remains will automatically be moved to the mortuary. If they have died at home, in a nursing home or hospice, their remains should ideally be removed to a chapel of rest by your preferred undertaker.

Please call us on the above number if you would like the contact details for the current UEA appointed undertaker. Use of the UEA appointed undertaker will have no bearing on our decision to accept the offer.

To process the donation offer we will require the following:

- **Evidence of Donor's consent**
 - if the person you are calling about has filled in a UEA bequest form, we will have this in our possession
- **GP's name and telephone number**
- **Location of the remains of the deceased**
- **Contact details for the person with responsibility for the remains**

We will contact the deceased's GP (and hospital Doctors if they die in hospital) to establish a cause of death and a decision will be made on whether the donation is acceptable.

You will be informed as soon as possible about the decision, we aim to do this within a maximum of two working days.

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If we decide to accept the donation:

We cannot officially accept the donation without a certified copy of the death certificate and the green burial or cremation form that accompanies it. We will ask you to register the death with your local registry office as soon as possible.

When registering the death inform the registrar that the deceased is going to be accepted for anatomical examination.

In order for us to collect the remains of the deceased and officially accept the donation, we must have the green cremation form and a certified copy of the death certificate, both of which you will obtain from the registrar when registering the death.

These forms should then be left with the remains of the deceased for our funeral directors to collect with the remains (at the funeral parlour or bereavement office at the hospital).

Once the remains have been brought into the care of UEA, we will send out forms to you in the post which we would be grateful are completed and returned to us as soon as possible. Please note that the Norwich Medical School will cover all costs from the time we accept the donation. Please make sure that any costs incurred before this point have been met.

We would be grateful if you would inform us of any change in contact details as notifications will be sent out from time to time.

If the donation is not accepted

Regrettably we cannot guarantee to accept the bequest. If we are unable to accept the bequest we will advise you to proceed with your own funeral arrangements.

Unhappily in this situation, UEA cannot offer any remuneration towards costs incurred for funeral arrangements.