

Steps to be completed at the time of the donor's death

If you and your loved ones have decided that body donation is the right choice for you, it is important that everyone understands the steps that need to be taken at the time of death.

Death occurs in a healthcare institution

The next of kin or substitute decision maker must inform the medical staff that the intention is to donate full body to the program.

Following the signing of the Death Certificate, the attending physician or designate with clinical knowledge and relevant medical history must contact the Inspector of Anatomy in the province in which the death occurred.

It is important that someone who has clinical knowledge of the deceased make contact with the Inspector of Anatomy.

Death occurs at home

To secure a death certificate, contact must be made with the family or attending physician or a member of the health care team at the time of death.

The physician or clinical designate must contact the Inspector of Anatomy, at which time further instructions will be given.

If you are interested in supporting the Human Body Donation Program via a legacy or memorial financial contribution, please contact us.

A lasting gift to medical science and teaching

The Human Body Donation Program is part of the Department of Medical Neuroscience within the Faculty of Medicine of Dalhousie University. The use of donated human remains is an essential part of teaching human anatomy to Medical, Dental, Health Professions and Life Sciences students.

Our Clinical Cadaver Program aids in the specialized training of surgical and life saving skills for residents and other specialized health professionals. These groups are provided with the necessary instruction to enable them to gain the requisite knowledge of human anatomy and competency-based skills.

The Department of Medical Neuroscience is a teaching unit and is not involved in determining cause of death or in investigating any issues related to donor pathologies.

Inspectors of Anatomy

NOVA SCOTIA AND PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Daytime: (902) 494.6850
24-Hour: (902) 473.2222

NEW BRUNSWICK

24-Hour: 1-888-553-6667

HUMAN BODY DONATION PROGRAM

Department of Medical Neuroscience
Dalhousie University
Sir Charles Tupper Building | 5850 College Street
PO Box 15000 | Halifax, NS B3H 4R2
Main Office: 902.494.6850 | Fax: 902.494.4859
Office Hours: 8AM–4PM (Mon–Fri, excl. holidays)
dal.ca/bodydonation



Human Donation Program

Information and procedures for persons considering donating their bodies for the advancement of medical education and clinical skills training.

For additional information and consent forms please visit:
dal.ca/bodydonation

Questions And Answers

Staying informed

When making major end-of-life decisions, it is important to understand all the details. We have gathered together a few of the most commonly asked questions in one place, to help you make an informed decision.

I have completed the intent to donate forms—does this guarantee my body is going to be accepted?

No, this only means we have your wishes on file.

What does my next of kin need to do upon my death?

Once the death certificate has been signed the attending physician or clinical designate must make contact with the Inspector of Anatomy. The next steps are outlined in this brochure.

How long will my body be in the care of the human body donation program?

There is usually a lapse of one to three years between death and the final disposition. In consultation with some donors and their families, some tissues may be kept for indefinite study.

Can I have my intent to donate forms removed?

If you change your mind prior to death, yes, please inform your loved ones about your final decision. The pre-registration forms are non-binding and we are able to remove your information from our files upon request prior to death.

Will I be accepted if I die outside of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, or Prince Edward Island?

Death must occur in the provinces listed above.

How do I obtain death statements for completion of final affairs?

Death statements will be mailed along with other documents to the designated legal next of kin.

Does the program have an age limit?

Although there is no maximum age limit, we do not accept donations from people under the age of 19.

Will my loved ones be able to view my remains?

No, viewing of the remains at the Department of Medical Neuroscience is not permitted.

Is full body donation the same as organ, tissue or brain donation?

No, if you require more information on the other programs, please contact:

NS CRITICAL CARE ORGAN & TISSUE DONATION PROGRAM

QEII Health Sciences Centre
(902) 473.5523

NEW BRUNSWICK ORGAN & TISSUE PROGRAM, ORGAN DIVISION

Horizon Health Network
1-888-553-6667 [24 hrs]

MARITIME BRAIN TISSUE BANK

Dalhousie University,
Faculty of Medicine
(902) 494.4130

What to expect when studies and research are complete

Each year we hold memorial services to commemorate the donors to medical science.

Options following cremation

We understand there are individual preferences for final disposition of the cremated remains.

The following are available options:

- Interment of the cremated remains at Dalhousie Memorial Gardens located within Pleasant Hill Cemetery, Lower Sackville, NS or;
- Returning the cremated remains to the appointed legal next of kin. Expenses incurred following the release of the urn, including interment, must be borne by the relatives or estate of the deceased.

Refusal of donation at the time of death

The program is dedicated to ensuring that the donated remains are used with the utmost respect and dignity. With this in mind we are occasionally in a position where we must temporarily close the program. Temporary closure may be due to the needs of the professional programs we support, certain medical reasons or other contraindications.

It is strongly recommended that you and your family be prepared to make alternate arrangements should the Inspector of Anatomy not accept the body donation.

If the donation is not accepted, the University will not be responsible for the expense connected with alternate arrangements.

