



School of Anatomical Sciences

7 York Rd, Parktown, 2193 • Telephone + 27 11 717 2441/2309/2209 • Fax + 27 86 589 7863

Dear prospective Body Donor:

Thank you for your enquiry. We greatly appreciate your desire to bequeath your body for medical education and medical science. Your wish to serve your fellow human beings in this manner is most gracious and public spirited.

The School of Anatomical Science's body donor programme is in full accordance with the National Health Act No 61 of 2003 section 62 as well as the Human Tissues Act No 65 of 1983 of the Republic of South Africa.

To ensure that a donor's wish to donate their body for educational and scientific purposes is honoured, it is necessary that the donor comply with certain legal formalities. The donor may donate his or her body if their will or codicil (or a document signed in the presence of at least two competent witnesses) specifies that this is their wish. The will, codicil or document should contain the following provision:

"Upon my death, my body shall be given to the School of Anatomical Sciences at the Medical School (Faculty of Health Sciences) of the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg for the purpose of medical education and research. I further direct that at the termination of these processes, the disposal of my remains shall be by cremation, at the expense of the University."

Please inform your family, your legal advisor, the executor of your estate, your doctor, and your spiritual advisor of your decision in this regard. Donors are strongly encouraged to discuss their intentions with their respective relatives so that the family is familiar with their wishes, and to ensure that as far as possible, those wishes will be carried out after death. Please provide the School of Anatomical Sciences with a copy of a duly signed and witnessed will or codicil or document, as the case may be, for our records.

Upon the death of a donor, the Executor of the Estate, doctor, spiritual advisor or a family member should notify the Senior Technical Officer of the School of Anatomical Sciences of this, by telephone (Phillip Legodi 011 717 2309 or Jacob Mekwa 011 717 2209) or by email (Phillip Legodi: Phillip.Legodi@wits.ac.za or Jacob Mekwa: Jacob.Mekwa@wits.ac.za).

In the event of the death of a donor occurring after normal University working hours (5pm or 17h00) or on a weekend, please contact:

- Doves Funeral Services, Funeral Directors at 10 Jorissen Street, Braamfontein, Johannesburg. Telephone number: 011 339 5967

Or

- Thom Kight and Company at 3 16th St, Vrededorp, Johannesburg. Telephone number: 011 837 5531

N.B. Other funeral undertakers charge a removal fee which will be for your account.



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The above funeral companies will arrange transport of the body to their premises and the School of Anatomical Sciences will then collect the body. The University, at its own expense, will be responsible for the transport of the body to the Medical School. However, with the ever increasing costs of transportation, the University is unable to accept a body donation from a person residing more than ± 300 kilometres from the Medical School unless the family is prepared to meet the costs of such transportation beyond the 300 km specification.

We are also unable to accept body donations from outside South Africa.



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Range of uses of donated bodies

The use of donated bodies is specifically related to teaching and research for Science and Health Science students and medical specialists. The teaching includes the dissection of the body, possible creation of demonstration specimens to highlight specific anatomical areas of interest as well as use of the skeleton. With current technological advances, students may be provided with images (including, but not limited to, radiological, photographic and CT scanning) of specific anatomical regions. Dissection videos may also be created. Please bear in mind that the donated bodies are treated with the utmost respect within the School of Anatomical Sciences and that the anonymity of the individual donor will not be compromised in any format or for any reason. Any research that will be conducted on the donated body has to be evaluated and approved by the Collections Committee of the School of Anatomical Sciences to ensure that the use of the remains are not compromised in any legal or ethical regard in accordance with the ethical clearance waiver granted by the Human Research Ethics Committee (Medical) of the University of the Witwatersrand. It is important to note that none of the material generated from the donor's remains will be used for profitable monetary gain.

Donors will be asked to indicate on their registration forms if they consent to their remains being transferred to other teaching institutions in Gauteng, or if they require the body to stay at the University of the Witwatersrand specifically.

Cornea donations

Donors under the age of 70 years can also choose to donate their corneas for cornea transplantation. Please indicate your choice in this regard on the donor registration form.

Maximum length of time the ashes will be retained

Depending on the wishes of the donor, the remains will either be retained within the School for an indefinite period of time or for a finite period. In the event that the donor opts for a finite period, the body will be retained within the School for up to of 3 years after which the School of Anatomical Sciences will cremate and return the ashes to the family. The School will only retain the ashes of the donor for a maximum of 5 years and will dispose of the ashes in an ethically suitable manner thereafter. It is the responsibility of the selected family member, friend or colleague of the donor to ensure that they collect the ashes from the School within this 5 year period. It is also the responsibility of this individual to ensure that they make the School aware of any change of contact details prior to or within this 5 year period.

Exceptions

The University is bound by certain rules governing the acceptance of human materials. This means that although the donor's body has been willed to the University, it may not be possible for the School of Anatomical Sciences to accept it in the following circumstances:

1. Should a donor die from a notifiable disease, such as:
 - Rabies
 - All Viral Haemorrhagic Fevers



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- Meningococcal Infections
- Infective Hepatitis
- Plague
- Smallpox
- Rickettsiosis
- Disseminated
- Tuberculosis

2. Other possible exclusion criteria:

- Physical condition of the body (e.g. open wounds)
- Unnatural causes (e.g. ballistic trauma, car accidents or any criminal causes of death)

The School of Anatomical Sciences cannot by law accept such a body (Department of Health regulations).

It is the practice of the School to inspect the body of a deceased donor to determine if the body is suitable for medical education, science and research.

If a body is deemed not to conform to requirements, due to any of the above mentioned conditions and cannot be accepted, the family will be informed of the fact and the body returned to them for burial or cremation.

Enclosed herewith, find two copies of an application form for registration as a donor to the School of Anatomical Sciences of the University of the Witwatersrand. If you are satisfied and in agreement with the conditions as stated above, please fill in both copies. Keep one form to be attached to your personal papers and return the other, together with the copy of the will, codicil or witnessed document, to the Head of the School of Anatomical Sciences at the above address. Upon receipt of your application, your name and particulars will be entered into our Body Donor Register and an acknowledgement of receipt will be posted to you at your address as stated on the application form.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact the School. For any enquiries or assistance, please contact Ms. Faith Sambo by telephone (011 717 2441) or by email (Faith.Sambo@wits.ac.za).

With appreciation of your noble desire to serve after death,

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Maryna Steyn'.

Professor Maryna Steyn

Head: School of Anatomical Sciences