

The Duke Anatomical Gifts Program *For Whole Body Donation*

Thank you for inquiring about The Duke Anatomical Gifts Program! Donors who generously choose to donate their bodies to our program, upon their passing, make an invaluable contribution to the education of healthcare professional students, surgeons, and residents. Whole-body donation is a profound gift that creates a ripple effect: the healthcare professionals who learn from their “silent teachers” go on to provide care to countless patients and advance the field of science.

Through this program, our students gain an unparalleled opportunity to study the intricate complexities of human anatomy. Please note that our body donation program is exclusively for educational purposes; we do not conduct research on diseases in our labs. Individuals wishing to donate their bodies for the study of specific medical conditions should explore clinical trials designed for that purpose. Additionally, we do not perform autopsies or produce medical reports.

A “Donor Card” serves as a first-person consent, legal document that indicates your **intent** to donate your body to our program upon your passing. **It is not an “application” for anatomical donation**, as we do not maintain records of potential donors. Instead, we assess each donation at or near the time of death based on the donor’s medical history at that time. If you or a loved one enters hospice care or death becomes imminent, please contact us. We recommend keeping one copy of your “Donor Card” in your wallet and providing another to your designated agent, who will assist with arrangements at the time of your passing.

The duration of a donor’s physical contribution to teaching typically lasts about one year, though it can range from two months to two years. Upon completion of their teaching role, we facilitate and cover the cost of cremation. Each donor is cremated individually. Families may choose to pick up the remains at Duke, have them mailed to their address, or opt for scattering in a designated area of Duke Forest.

Each spring, following the academic year in which the donor’s cremation occurred, we hold an annual Memorial Service at Duke Chapel in Durham, NC. This service honors the donors who supported the School of Medicine that year. It provides an opportunity for students, doctors, and instructors to express their gratitude and share how these donations have profoundly impacted their education and careers. They are deeply humbled and inspired by this extraordinary gift.

Whole-body donation for medical education is a gift of immeasurable value, and we are sincerely grateful for your interest in making such a meaningful contribution. Please review the attached materials and feel free to contact our office with any questions. When the time comes, we will assist your loved ones with compassion and support to guide them through the process.

All the best,



Emerson Bennett, *Program Coordinator*
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Criteria for Donation

*These guidelines are established for the physical body's suitability for teaching and the safety of our staff, students, and educators. The Duke Anatomical Gifts Program has the right to reject a body for donation at any point in the process **under any circumstances.***

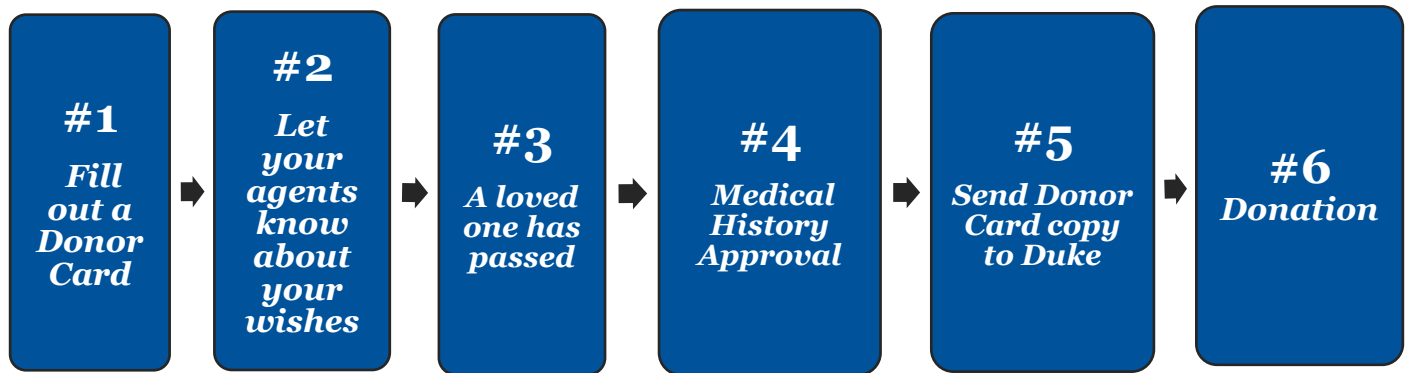
INCLUSION Criteria

- Within 3 days of one's death
- 18 years of age or older (There is no age maximum)
- Height: 6ft or under
- Weight: Less than 200 lbs.
- Has muscle mass (Cannot be emaciated or cachexic)
- Cancer of any origin
- Orthopedic work (Joint arthroplasty, plates, screws, etc.)

EXCLUSION Criteria

- History of Hepatitis A-E (Even if it was deemed cured)
- Tested positive for COVID-19 within 5 days of death
- History of Intravenous Drug Abuse
- Open Wounds (Stage 4 bed sores, surgical wounds, and other miscellaneous wounds)
- Physical Trauma to the body at the time of death (Homicide, suicide, burns, etc.)
- HIV/AIDS
- Prion Diseases
- Organ Donation (*EXCEPT* for corneal donation)
- Severe Jaundice
- Significant Edema or Ascites
- Recent Radioactive Implants (Within 6 months)
- Exploratory Autopsy
- Body was in Medical Isolation
- Fungal or Bacterial Infections (including but not limited to staph, sepsis, E.coli, TB, respiratory infections, etc.)

Duke Anatomical Gifts Donation Timeline



Donation Timeline Specifics

1. **This packet includes “Donor Cards”** (attached, wallet-sized cards) that you can fill out and keep in your wallet or another safe place.
 - a. “Donor Cards” must be signed in the presence of **two impartial witnesses** (who are not immediate family members).
 - b. If, for any reason, you are unable to complete the “Donor Card” or pass away before signing it, a representative from the Duke Anatomical Gifts Program can prepare an “Agreement to Donation” form. This form can be signed by your next of kin (NOK) or healthcare power of attorney (HCPOA) on your behalf.
2. **Keep all documents with you until your passing.** In the meantime, share your decision with family, friends, and healthcare providers so they are aware of your wishes.
3. **When the time comes,** the person assisting you (e.g., spouse, partner, adult children, hospice nurse) will call the death call number (919-812-7430) listed on the back of the “Donor Card” to notify us of your passing.
4. **We will confirm eligibility** for anatomical donation based on your medical history at the time of passing (refer to page 2 for donation criteria).
5. **Once approved for donation,** we will request copies of your “Donor Card” via secure email or fax (919-681-5520). Please note, there will be additional documents that your agent has to complete at that time, that are **not** necessary to fill out in advance.
6. **After paperwork is received,** we will arrange a mortuary transport to bring the body to our lab in Durham.
 - a. Our facility is open during business hours to receive donors. We are closed on weekends and holidays. We strive to receive the body within three days of passing. If the passing occurs outside business hours, over a weekend, or during a holiday, the body should be kept in cold storage at a funeral home or morgue until transport is possible.
 - b. Even though your body will be donated to our program, a funeral home must still be involved. They handle transportation (requiring a mortuary transport license) and file the death certificate (as our program does not file death certificates).
 - c. You are not required to choose a mortuary transport service or funeral home in advance. If no preference is indicated, we will contact a local funeral home or mortuary transport service to retrieve the body and deliver it to our lab.
 - d. If the cost of transportation is a financial burden, our program can cover the expense of mortuary transport. However, any additional services—such as obtaining certified copies of the death certificate, writing an obituary, etc.—will be the family’s responsibility. If financial assistance is needed, please notify us at the time of passing; prior written notice is not required.



INTENT TO MAKE ANATOMICAL GIFT

In compliance with the Uniform Anatomical Gift Act of the North Carolina General Statutes and in hope that I

may help others, I, _____
hereby give my entire body intact for anatomical study and research, if needed and medically acceptable, and release protected health information, if available, to take effect upon my death. **Signed by the donor and the following two witnesses in the presence of each other.**

----- Fold here for wallet-size card -----

Signature of Donor

Date Signed

Donor's Date of Birth

Donor's Current City & State

Signature of Witness #1

City & State

Signature of Witness #2

City & State

Contact Duke Anatomical Gifts upon death:

Weekdays: **919-681-5471** (closed weekends & holidays)

24 hour emergency phone: Monday-Friday: **919-812-7430**

Representative to assist at the time of my death:

Name

Relationship

Phone Number

Alternate Phone Number

Helpful information:

Doctor: _____ Phone: _____

I have chosen this funeral service to transport/hold my body while eligibility for donation is being determined (or hold at hospital decedent care/morgue):

Funeral Home/Transport Service

Phone Number

If this company is no longer operating or available, or circumstances arise that create the need, I authorize, with my signature on the back of this card, Duke Anatomical Gifts Program to arrange transport services in order that it may facilitate the donation of my body.

Please check back every 2 years for any changes.

Keep one signed and witnessed copy of this card in your wallet & give the other to someone who can assist at time of death.