

Anatomical Gifts

The term *anatomical gifts* refers to eyes, or organs, tissues, or entire bodies that are donated to medical organizations for transplantation or instructional and scientific purposes. These gifts are used in many surgical procedures that improve or save people's lives, as well as in medical research and instruction. Donated bodies are indispensable in medical research and the education of physicians. Many opportunities for anatomical donation are available at no cost to donors or their families.

If you want to be a donor, it is best to make arrangements in advance, and it is important to inform your family about your plan. It is also important to have a backup plan in case for any reason your gift cannot be accepted.

Organ Donation

If you want to donate your eyes and/or organs at the time of death, you need only check the organ-donor box on your driver license or fill out and carry an organ-donor card. Registration with an organization that accepts anatomical donations is advisable but usually not essential. When a person has indicated in writing his or her wish to donate organs, health care providers usually also seek the family's permission before removing organs. The cost of surgery to remove donors' organs for transplantation

is borne by transplant recipients.

If a person has arranged to be an organ donor and has an alternative arrangement for whole body donation, then organ donation has priority if the person dies in circumstances that permit extraction of viable organs. A body from which organs have been removed is not acceptable for donation to a medical school for instruction. If a would-be organ donor dies in circumstances that do not permit organ donation, his or her family can arrange for whole-body donation.

Body Donation

A person who wants to donate his or her body to a medical institution or organization should make arrangements with the chosen organization. The receiving organization should be called at the time of death. Many receiving organizations provide transportation at no cost to donors' families. In some instances a family must employ a funeral director to provide transportation.

Most people can donate their bodies. Donors must be at least 18 years old. There is no upper age limit, and few medical conditions disqualify a body. A donation may be refused if an autopsy has been performed or if the donor is exceptionally obese or had a communicable disease that could pose a safety hazard to people working with the body. If you want to be a donor, then make the arrangements and

inform your family.

The New York State Department of Health maintains a directory of organ-procurement organizations, tissue banks and eye banks. The internet address is: http://www.health.state.ny.us/professionals/patients/donation/organ/organizations_and_banks.htm#tissue

Health Care Proxy and Living Will forms are available at the website of the New York State Attorney General. The internet address is: http://www.oag.state.ny.us/bureaus/health_care/pdfs/EOLGUIDE.pdf

Members of the Funeral Consumers Alliance of the Finger Lakes should indicate the name of the medical school or other receiving organization on an Alliance enrollment form and should send a copy of that organization's acceptance receipt to the funeral home of choice. The funeral-home arrangement will be utilized if the donor's family wishes to provide transportation or in the unlikely event that the medical organization cannot accept the donation. In the latter circumstance, the default service for members is direct cremation.

Medical schools and other anatomical gift programs serving the Finger Lakes area of New York State are listed on the back panels of this folder.

**Medical Schools and Other
Anatomical Gift Programs
Serving the Finger Lakes Area of
New York State**

SUNY Upstate Medical University
Anatomical Gift Program
Dept. of Cell & Developmental Biology
750 East Adams Street
Syracuse, NY 13210
Tel. (315) 464-4348
<http://www.upstate.edu/cdb/donor/>

University of Rochester Medical Center
Anatomical Gift Program
601 Elmwood Avenue, Box 709
Rochester, NY 14642
Tel. (585) 275-2592
http://www.urmc.rochester.edu/SMD/education/oer/forms/anatomical_gift_program/

Rochester / Finger Lakes Eye & Tissue
Bank
524 White Spruce Blvd.
Rochester, NY 14623
Tel. (585) 272-7890 or (800) 568-4321
<http://www.rehpb.org/Page.asp?Script=1>

Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network
Corporate Woods of Brighton, Building 30,
Suite 220
Rochester, NY 14623
Tel. (800) 810-5494
<http://www.donorrecovery.org/>

Central New York Eye and Tissue Bank
517 East Washington Street
Syracuse NY, 13202
Tel. (315) 476-0199
<http://www.cnyetb.org/>

**National organizations licensed in New
York State**

International Institute for the Advancement
of Medicine
<http://www.iiam.org/index.php>

LifeLegacy Foundation
<http://www.lifelegacy.org/>

Anatomical Gifts

You can make a difference

Save a life

**Contribute to advancement of
medical science**

**Help with education of
health care professionals**



Prepared by the
*Funeral Consumers Alliance of
the Finger Lakes*

June 2009