

Our donors help to alleviate suffering and promote the health of future generations.



CONTACT

Body Donor Program Coordinator

Discipline of Anatomy
The University of Newcastle
Callaghan NSW 2308

E bodydonor@newcastle.edu.au

**Call 02 4921 5663
(during business hours)**

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**BODY DONOR
PROGRAM**

You can help train our future doctors, specialists and health professionals



Human body donation to the University of Newcastle provides an invaluable resource to medical science. By personally contributing to the ongoing education of hundreds of future doctors, specialists and health professionals our donors help to alleviate suffering and promote the health of future generations.

The majority of donated bodies are used to teach anatomy to medical students and other health science undergraduates. Generally, donated body parts are dissected to show muscles, blood vessels and nerves. In some cases they are used for medical research or to help train surgeons (surgical training workshops).

At the University of Newcastle the study of anatomy is a critical component of many undergraduate degree courses including medicine, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, medical radiation science, biomedical science, speech pathology, oral health and sports science.

At all times the remains of our body donors are treated with dignity and respect. Students and researchers are keenly aware of the special privileges they have been granted through the generosity of our body donors.

HOW CAN I DONATE?

The University of Newcastle accepts donations of human bodies from the Lower Hunter Valley, Newcastle and Central Coast regions. Prospective donors need to be over 18 years (there is no upper age limit) and living within this area.

Prospective body donors are sent an information package that contains the appropriate forms. To register as a body donor, these forms must be signed

and returned to the University. The donor will then receive a letter of registration and a donor card that they can keep in their purse or wallet.

The donor forms also need to be co-signed by the most senior next-of-kin, or where there are no next-of-kin, by the executor of the donor's will.

The order of seniority of next-of-kin for an adult is as follows:

1. Spouse or domestic partner
2. Son or daughter
3. Parent
4. Brother or sister

Occasionally circumstances may arise that prevent the University from accepting a donor after they have passed away (even if they have signed the donor forms).

These circumstances include the following:

- Coroner's cases
- Certain highly infectious diseases
- Certain central nervous system diseases
- Severe peripheral vascular disease
- Deceased has undergone a post mortem or major surgical procedure
- Physical size and condition of the body
- Death occurring outside the acceptance area
- Late notification of death
- Strong family objections
- Donor storage area has reached its capacity

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I DIE?

When a donor passes away, the Body Donor Program Coordinator makes arrangements to transport the deceased into the care of the Discipline of Anatomy as soon as possible. If the University accepts the donation the body is promptly embalmed to preserve the tissues and prevent deterioration.

The University arranges and pays for transportation, which is carried out by a professional funeral director. At this time, the family can arrange and pay for their own memorial service, if they wish to do so.

The Head of the Discipline of Anatomy has been issued a licence to 'Conduct the Study and Practice of Anatomy' by the NSW Department of Health.

The use of donated bodies is strictly governed by government legislation. Usually this legislation allows the University to retain and use donated bodies for four years. At the end of this period the University arranges and pays for cremation of the donor's remains.

A donor also has the opportunity to give the University permission to keep their remains for longer than four years. This enables further teaching and research to be undertaken by the University.

At the conclusion of the donation period the University will arrange and pay for a cremation of the donor's remains.

After the cremation has taken place the University can notify the next-of-kin that the ashes are ready for collection or scattering (depending on the donor's initial wishes).