

1. Can I donate my body after I donate organs and tissues?

In order to provide the best possible learning and research experience for the medical schools, successful organ and tissue donation makes you ineligible for whole body donation. The exception is eyes; you may donate your eyes and still donate your body to a medical school.

2. If I donate my eyes, will they still take my body?

Yes, you can still donate your body to a medical school if you donate your eyes.

3. How will the hospital know that I am a total body donor?

When possible, the medical schools prefer to have all of the paperwork signed and settled as soon as you make a decision to donate. This will make the process smoother when you pass away. Typically, the medical school you chose to donate to will provide you with a donor card for you to carry in your wallet. We also encourage you to tell your family and friends of your wish to donate so upon your death, they will be able to speak to your wishes.

4. After they are done with the body, will it be returned to my family?

When you make arrangements to donate your body, your final wishes will be discussed with the medical school. Medical education and research typically takes 1-2 years. After that period, your body will be cremated and returned to your family if that is your wish. Otherwise, your body will be cremated and buried by the medical school. Some schools offer the scattering of ashes over the water.

5. Will they bury or cremate the body?

Your body will be cremated, and returned to your family or buried by the medical school, whichever you prefer.

6. What happens if I am in another state when I die?

The medical school cannot cover the cost of transporting your body from another state. If your family or estate pays for the transportation, then the donation process can go through as planned.

7. What organs (if any) can I donate and still donate my body to science?

You can only donate your eyes if you would like to donate your body to sciences.

8. How long does a school keep the body?

Medical education and research typically takes 1-2 years.

9. Are there any costs involved in becoming a total body donor?

No, there is no cost to you or your family for donation to a medical school.

10. Can I register anywhere else to donate my body or organs, other than the medical school?

We recommend that you do not donate your body to anyone other than a medical school. To donate your organs, we recommend you contact the New York Alliance for Donation.

11. Can I still have a viewing in a funeral home if I donate my body to science?

Typically no, the process moves fairly quickly from the time you pass away and your body arriving at the medical school. A brief showing may be arranged, but your family will have to coordinate that closely with the medical school.

12. Does my family have to sign a consent form as well at the time of my death to release the body?

No, as long as you have completed all of the paperwork for donation, they do not need to sign anything. If you decide to donate your body but are unable to complete the paperwork, your family may sign for you.

13. Is my family notified of anything research done or discovered as a result of my donation?

Since there are multiple studies run simultaneously, it is often difficult for medical schools to notify your family of any medical findings.

14. Are there specific schools that want specific organs, let's say the brain as an example?

There are research centers that focus on specific areas of the body, but no commitment can be made that a specific organ of your will go there.

15. Is there a cost to the family?

There is no cost to you or your family for donation to a medical school.