

“My husband was diagnosed with AD in 1994, and came to the Memory & Aging Program because of a suggestion from a friend. We both enrolled as a team. It took an effort for me to make the decision, but so many members of his family were troubled with this ailment....”



“Because we had children, we made arrangements for brain donation since I felt that they may be at risk. My giving his brain may help the facility learn more of what causes Alzheimer’s. I was contributing to that research.”

“He was taken to the funeral home after he died and because we had made arrangements in advance with the funeral home director he was transported to Rhode Island Hospital where his brain was removed. He was back at the funeral home that same day. We had an open casket for the wake and people told me how wonderful he looked.”

“I would suggest to people thinking about donating, don’t feel guilty about it and don’t feel bad about it. Take personal feelings out of it. It’s for the benefit of others. He was my loved one. I really loved my husband, but with so much of that in his family, I had to do this. I talked to my children and they all agreed.”

401-455-6403

www.memorydisorder.org

Memory & Aging Program
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Adapted with permission from ADRC, Washington University, St. Louis (NIA-P50-AG05681)

Brain Donation



A Gift For Future Generations



Brown Medical School

Why is brain donation important?

A brain autopsy is the only way to confirm the cause of dementia. Information from the autopsy is helpful to researchers working to better understand Alzheimer's and related disorders to find a cure.

How is it a gift?



Alzheimer's disease and other causes of dementia can run in families. Knowing that you truly had the disease (or not) allows your surviving family members to seek help and make plans for the future. It is a gift to them.

Who can donate?

Current and past participants in our research are welcome. If you wish to donate, it is important for your family members to know your wishes and be a part of the decision-making process. Plans need to be made in advance because families have other important concerns to deal with at the time of a loved one's passing.

Does it cost anything?

The autopsy is free, but certain transportation charges may apply.

How is the autopsy done?

Your family must notify us of your death quickly (within 2 hours). Your body is then taken to Rhode Island Hospital where the brain is removed. Not to worry, your face will look normal afterwards at the funeral home.



Who can give permission?

Rhode Island law lets a person give consent for autopsy while still alive and also authorizes others to do so after death or if a person becomes incompetent.



What does my family receive?

Your family will receive a written report on the autopsy. This letter tells the diagnosis, summarizes other findings, and includes a number to call if there are questions.

Can I have an open casket funeral?



Most definitely yes. The brain is removed in such a way that your face and hair are not altered. This is a common thing for funeral directors and morticians. Your funeral director will know what to do to make you look your best.

What if I decline on religious grounds?

You can decline for any reason, religious or otherwise. Donating is your choice. It is a good idea to talk with your family and your pastor before finalizing a decision.