Supporting Innovations and Outreach in Healthy Aging

www.musc.edu/brainbank
what is a “brain bank”? 

A brain bank is a centralized collection center for brain tissue, obtained after death for the purpose of research.

Named in memory of former South Carolina Governor, Caroll A. Campbell, Jr., the Carroll A. Campbell, Jr. Neuropathology Laboratory is a novel MUSC research center, committed to being the link between clinicians, scientists and pathologists involved in aging and dementia research throughout the state of South Carolina.

our mission

The Carroll A. Campbell, Jr. Laboratory will generate a collection of well defined brain tissue from individuals with neurological disorders such as Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease, cancer, stroke, and age-matched healthy brains in order to:

- Provide valuable information about rate and cause for these disorders in South Carolina compared to other regions

- Serve as a link between basic scientists and clinicians to generate translational research
**Our Services**

1. Coordinate the brain tissue donation program to seek donors both with AND without neurological disorders
2. Provide a report for family members based on the studied brain tissue
3. Lead research trials to better understand the mechanisms of neurodegenerative disorders
4. Foster close collaboration with clinicians to rapidly advance discoveries in the laboratory to patients in need

Our primary goal is to improve the care and treatment of patients suffering from devastating neurodegenerative diseases, such as Parkinson’s disease. To do this, we must increase the brain tissue available to our researchers for study.

**Donation Options**

As our understanding of the aging brain advances, it has become clear that sensory organs controlling vision and hearing are affected by neurological disorders, including many forms of dementia. Therefore, we believe it is important to study these associated structures, in parallel with brain tissue, in hopes of forming a more complete understanding of these devastating diseases. It is for this reason, we ask donors to consider including the structures closely associated with the brain, which are:

- **Cerebrospinal Fluid (CSF)** - surrounding the brain and blood
- **Temporal Bone** - a small part of bone encasing the brain, which also contains the structures of the inner ear that control hearing and balance
- **Eyes & Aqueous and Vitreous Humor** - eyes and the fluid inside the eyes, which are closely associated with many neurological disorders, including several forms of dementia

The final consent form, that is completed by the next of kin at the time of death, will have the following two donation options:

1. **Brain and associated structures**: includes blood sample, CSF, ocular fluid, eyes, and portion of temporal bones
2. **Brain and fluid only**: includes blood sample, CSF, ocular fluid

We encourage donors and their families to discuss these options ahead of time to aid in making this decision.
frequently asked questions

Q: Why is brain donation important?
A: Many neurological disorders are unique to humans. Therefore, human tissue is vital in order for scientists to conduct effective research. A lack of tissue for study is one of the major barriers to advancing our knowledge of devastating diseases such as Alzheimer’s disease, hearing loss, Parkinson’s disease and stroke.

Q: Are there any costs to the donor or family?
A: No, unlike some organ donation programs, MUSC will cover all costs associated with donation, including any additional transportation required.

Q: Why are brains from people without neurodegenerative diseases needed?
A: Scientists need normal brain tissue for research because they must compare normal age-related changes occurring in the brain to the changes occurring in diseased brains. It is also important to study changes in the brain that occur with healthy aging.

Q: How is the tissue used?
A: Once the tissue undergoes a complete examination, the tissue is then safely stored and distributed to qualified researchers conducting studies on aging and neurological disorders.

Q: Will it delay funeral plans?
A: No. Removal of the brain and associated structures is completed shortly after death. Therefore, it should not delay funeral plans.

Q: Can the family still have an open casket?
A: Yes. Removal of the brain and associated structures does not leave any disfigurement to the face or ears. Funeral homes routinely deal with these situations.

Q: I have registered to be an Organ Donor on my driver’s license. Does this include my brain?
A: No, organ donation and brain donation are separate matters. The sticker on your driver’s license does not give us permission to receive a brain.

Q: Can I donate my entire body to the brain bank?
A: No, whole body donation is facilitated by the MUSC Anatomical Gift Program. Furthermore, an individual cannot donate to both programs.

Q: Will the family receive a report of the autopsy?
A: Yes, a report will be sent to the family. Please note, this report takes 3 - 6 months to generate.

“The harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph.”
- Thomas Paine
how do I become a donor?

1. Complete and return the Donor Registration Form by mail, fax, email or online at www.musc.edu/brainbank.

2. Upon receipt of the Donor Registration Form, we will send you a wallet-sized Donor Card.
   We encourage all potential donors to carry this card with them, as it may help facilitate the donation process.

3. Have a family discussion to inform your loved ones about your decision to become a donor, as well as your physician.

4. At the time of impending death, please call 843.494.1578 or page a staff member at 843.792.0590 (enter pager ID 13527) to notify our staff so arrangements can be made.

5. A Post-mortem Consent Form must be completed by the legal next-of-kin after death in order to authorize the removal of the brain.

This form must be presented at the time of autopsy. The family must also authorize the release of medical records to the Carroll A. Campbell Jr. Neuropathology Laboratory.
CARROLL A. CAMPBELL, JR. NEUROPATHOLOGY LABORATORY
DONOR REGISTRATION FORM

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY OR TYPE ENTIRE FORM.

Please complete the form and mail to: Carroll A. Campbell Neuropathology Lab
173 Ashley Avenue
BSB Suite 403
Charleston, SC 29425

Name: ____________________________  SSN: _______ - _______ - _______  

Last  First  Middle

Mailing Address: ________________________________

City: __________________  State: _______  Zip: _______

Home Phone: (____) - _______  Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy): _______ / _______ / _______

Email Address: ________________________________

Race:  □ Caucasian  □ Black  □ Hispanic  □ American Indian  □ Oriental  □ Other __________________

(specify Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, etc.)

Sex:  □ Male  □ Female

Marital Status:  □ Married  □ Never married  □ Widowed  □ Divorced  □ Separated

Current Diagnosis: ____________________________  Age at Onset of Disease: _______

(If Applicable)

Primary Care Physician: ____________________________

How did you hear about us?  □ Friend  □ Health Fair  □ Speaking Event  □ Physician  □ Other __________________

Next of Kin Name: ____________________________  Relationship: __________________

(Specify spouse, son, daughter, etc.)

Address: ____________________________  City: _______  State: _______  Zip: _______

Home Phone: (____) - _______  Alternate Phone: (____) - _______

Email Address: ____________________________

Signature: ____________________________  Date: ____________

(Donor or Guardian)

You may also complete a donor registration form online at www.musc.edu/brainbank