



## Glossary of frequently used terms in donation and transplantation

Term	Explanation
<b>Body bequest, donating your body to medical science</b>	In New Zealand you can donate your body to medical science at the University of Auckland Medical School <a href="http://www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/bodybequest">www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/bodybequest</a> or Otago University. <a href="http://www.otago.ac.nz/medical-school/about/bequest-of-bodies">http://www.otago.ac.nz/medical-school/about/bequest-of-bodies</a>
<b>Brain death/ Donation after brain death (DBD)</b>	Most people understand that death occurs when a person's heart and breathing stop, but death can also occur when the brain dies. After a brain haemorrhage (bleeding inside the brain) or severe head injury, the brain becomes swollen in the same way that muscles become swollen when injured. As the brain is contained within the skull, which is rigid, the brain cannot expand to make room for the swelling. The pressure in the skull will keep increasing until it cuts off the blood supply (and oxygen) to the brain. When the brain dies, it can never recover and this is what is called brain death.
<b>Brain death testing</b>	There are a number of physical changes in pupil reaction, heart rate, blood pressure and body temperature that happen when the brain dies. These changes together with the loss of other natural responses such as breathing, coughing and blinking cause doctors to suspect that the brain has died. Two separate clinical assessments are carried out, at different times, by two appropriately qualified doctors to find out whether or not the brain has died. The time that the second brain death assessment is completed is the time of the death of the person.
<b>Deceased donor</b>	Someone who has donated organs and/or tissues for transplant following their death.
<b>Deceased organ donation</b>	The donation of organs after death. In New Zealand it is possible to donate your heart, lungs, liver, kidneys and pancreas. Organ donation is only possible when a person is on a ventilator (breathing machine) in an intensive care unit (ICU), usually with severe brain damage. Fewer than 1% of all deaths happen this way.
<b>Donation after circulatory death (DCD)</b>	Donation after circulatory death (DCD) allows the option of organ donation from patients after their heart has stopped and they have died.
<b>Donor coordinator</b>	A nurse specialist who coordinates all aspects of the organ and tissue donation process. This includes organising the documentation for the organ and/or tissue donation to proceed, organising blood and tissue typing, coordinating the donor surgery and transporting the organs to transplant centres. They also provide on-going support for the donor family.



**Donor family**

The family of a person who has donated organs or tissues for transplant.

**Driver licence**

In May 1999, answering the question “Would you be willing to donate organs in the event of your death? Yes/No” became compulsory when obtaining a New Zealand driver licence, and again when the licence is renewed every 10 years. If the response is “Yes”, the word DONOR appears on the licence. However this answer does not meet the required legal standard for informed consent in the Human Tissue Act (2008).

The driver licence is not a donor register. New Zealand does not have an organ donor register.

If you are ever in a situation where donation is possible, doctors will discuss this with your family.

Accurate information about organ and tissue donation and guidelines for having a conversation about your wishes with your family is available on our website [www.donor.co.nz](http://www.donor.co.nz)

**Family agreement to donate**

The Human Tissue Act (2008) requires that there be informed consent before organ and tissue donation may proceed.

**Live/living donation**

This is when a living person donates an organ or part of an organ to another person for transplant. This is usually a kidney or a segment of liver.

Directed donation is where a person donates a kidney or a segment of liver to someone they know.

Non-directed or ‘altruistic’ kidney donation is where they do not know the recipient and the kidney is transplanted to the most appropriate person on the transplant waiting list.

**Live/Living donor**

A living person who has donated a kidney or part of their liver for transplant to another person.

**Organ Donation New Zealand (ODNZ)**

A 24 hour national health service which coordinates all deceased organ donation and some tissue donation throughout New Zealand. ODNZ also provides education and support for health professionals working in donation.

**Organ retrieval/donor surgery/  
Donor surgical teams**

ODNZ now recommends the use of the term ‘donor surgery’ for describing the retrieval of organs from a donor for transplantation. The team of health professionals who travel to the donor hospital to retrieve organs are called the ‘donor surgical teams’.

**Recipient**

A person who receives an organ or tissue transplant

**Rejection**

Transplant recipients take medication to prevent their immune system from damaging the transplanted organ. This immune process is called rejection.



**Split liver**

Where the liver is divided into two and transplanted to two recipients. The larger portion of the liver usually goes to an adult and the smaller portion of the liver to a child.

**Tissue donation**

The donation of body tissues after death. In New Zealand you can donate eye tissue (cornea and sclera), heart valves and skin.

Tissue donation can occur in most circumstances where people die (at home, in a hospice, on a hospital ward).

**Tissue typing**

A test that measures the degree of immune similarity between donors and potential recipients. This information is used as part of the allocation of some organs for transplant, in particular kidneys.

**Transplant Coordinator**

A nurse specialist, different from a donor coordinator, who coordinates all aspects of the transplant process, including caring for the transplant recipient pre and post-transplant, managing patients on the transplant waiting list and coordinating the transplant operation. Transplant coordinators are not involved in the donation process.

**Transplant waiting list**

A list of people waiting for an organ transplant that is managed by a transplant unit. For example, the Liver Transplant Unit manages the waiting list for livers; the Heart and Lung Transplant Unit manages the respective waiting lists for hearts and lungs.

**Ventilator**

Mechanical breathing machine

For more information about organ donation, please visit [www.donor.co.nz](http://www.donor.co.nz) or contact

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