



**Tshwane University  
of Technology**  
*We empower people*



*In the wake of personal tragedy...  
a Fresh perspective on  
Tissue Donation*



*“Grief is a journey,  
often perilous and without  
clear direction, that must be taken.  
The experience of grieving cannot  
be ordered or categorised,  
hurried or controlled,  
pushed aside or ignored indefinitely.  
It is inevitable as breathing,  
as change, as love.  
It may be postponed,  
but it will not be denied.”*

**Centre for Tissue Engineering**  
*Faculty of Science*

**W**hether sudden or expected, facing the death of a loved one is overwhelming. You are probably experiencing a variety of emotions, ranging from anger and despair to disbelief, shock and numbness. Along with these emotions, you have many decisions that must be made at a time when you feel you are least prepared to make them.

**One such decision is the freedom to decide in favour of organ and tissue donation. In this way, you can ensure that you or your loved one leave a wonderful final legacy of love and hope in helping another.**

The need for organ and tissue transplantation is vast but impossible to overcome without people who, despite the pain and finality of death, still decide to help others in need.

### **What can be donated at this time?**

 **Corneas** - The thin, clear tissue layer that covers the iris and pupil can be carefully removed and used in transplantation to give or restore sight to a blind or severely impaired person.

 **Bone & Tendons** - The long bones in the limbs (arms & legs) can surgically be removed and used for transplantation in patients who have suffered bone loss due to trauma, injury or disease and can provide new ability and quality of life.



**Heart Valves** - Sometimes only natural valves can be used to correct a dysfunction in the heart of a patient and will not only improve, but save his or her life.



**Skin** - Only the very top layer of skin (epidermis) is carefully removed from the legs and back, and is used very efficiently in the treatment and transplantation of burn victims.

*You may choose to donate only one or even all of the above tissues. Although time is of the essence, Bone Tissue can be donated up to 4 days after death.*

### **Is there a charge for donating tissue?**

No, you would neither pay nor receive any payment for tissue donation. The cost of the procedure is paid for by the CTE.

### **Where is the tissue retrieval done?**

A specially trained team conducts the procedure in either the hospital, the local mortuary or at the funeral home of your choice.

### **Will my loved one be treated with dignity?**

CTE employs only professionals who are bound by very strict codes of conduct to ensure that each donor is treated with the utmost respect and dignity. The donor's body is not disfigured in any way and prosthesis is used in all cases to reconstruct the area of retrieval. Donation, therefore, does not prevent you from having a normal viewing or open coffin on the day of the cremation or burial service.

## Will donation delay the funeral?

No. CTE, in collaboration with the funeral home, will work within the time limits as determined by your funeral arrangements.

## Will I know who gets my loved one's tissue?

For privacy and legislative reasons, donors and recipients are not identified.

## What happens after we decide to donate?

You will be asked to complete and sign the necessary consent form. The CTE will then make the relevant arrangements to perform the retrieval as soon as possible.

The decision to donate tissue of a loved one who has died is not easy for some people. In many cases, people simply never thought about the opportunity to give life to another individual or discussed it with the person who is now gone. Thinking about the following questions may help you and your family reach an agreement about donation.

### Why should I donate?

People donate for many different reasons:

For some, donation is a way of turning a senseless tragedy into something meaningful, helping others and lessening their grief.

Other people consider tissue donation a practical matter and make their decision in an unemotional way.

If you are struggling with the issue, think about what kind of person your loved one was. Would he or she help someone if given the chance? Could this act of generosity leave a final legacy of hope?

## Who is the CTE?

The Centre for Tissue Engineering is a tissue bank dedicated to promoting donation, education and research for the purpose of improving the quality of life through tissue transplantation. The CTE is situated at the CSIR in Pretoria and is an entity of the Tshwane University of Technology.

Losing someone you love causes great pain and suffering for those left behind. We, at the CTE understand this and want to help.

**Please feel free to contact our trained coordinators for further assistance:**

**Free State, Cape & KZN:**

Sandra Venter - 082 325 3448

**North West, Vaal Triangle & Northern Cape:**

Elize Scheepers - 082 411 7109

**Gauteng, Mpumalanga & Limpopo:**

Marna Horn - 082 379 8536

Office - 012 349 3500

## ***What others have said...***



*“The butterfly is a symbol of new life and became our symbol of tissue donation. When our daughter died she left her former life behind, but through donation, she was able to live on in a new way.”*



*“Giving someone a fuller or longer life (through donation) would have been a comfort to me.*

*I would have given permission if only given the chance.”*



*“Because of your loved one’s donation, our family can still enjoy lots of happy celebrations!”*