

As experts in the field of brain and neurologic disease research, we at the Department of Neurological Sciences and the Movement Disorders Center share a desire to see a cure for these diseases sometime in the future.

The primary goals of medical research are to find the cause of disease and develop new treatments. To achieve these goals, it is essential that medical investigators examine the brain tissue of patients who die with neurological diseases and compare these findings to people without these conditions.

We are asking that patients, their families and friends consider an autopsy at the time of death. We understand what a personal and difficult decision this is, especially since it concerns the brain. However, scientists cannot answer the questions alone. You are the source that can assist them.

The autopsy may help thousands of others in the future if a cause and cure are identified. Allowing researchers the opportunity to examine brain tissue is an immense contribution to science.

The advantages of agreeing to an autopsy are several. We can:

- confirm the diagnosis,
- make tissue available for research on the causes of Parkinson's disease and the factors that contribute to disease progression.

The Rush Parkinson's disease Brain Bank is

component of the Section of Movement Disorders.

WHAT IS THE RUSH PARKINSON'S DISEASE BRAIN BANK?

The Rush Parkinson's disease Brain Bank is a centralized resource for the collection and distribution of human brain tissue, other nervous tissue specimens and spinal fluid. The tissue is distributed to scientists for research into the cause and treatment of neurological disease. Privacy is respected and confidentiality is always maintained.

WHAT DOES AN AUTOPSY COST?

The Rush Parkinson's disease Brain Bank is primarily funded by the Rush Movement Disorders section. Autopsy involves no cost to the family. Transportation costs to the Medical Center, however, need to be discussed with your funeral director. The Rush Parkinson's disease Brain Bank coordinator can assist you with questions.

WHAT IF A PERSON IS INTERESTED IN THE PROGRAM BUT HAS NEVER BEEN EXAMINED AT RUSH?

If an interested individual is not under the care of a Rush neurologist, he or she need to schedule a single appointment to be seen in our clinic.

HOW LONG WILL AN AUTOPSY TAKE?

A brain autopsy takes approximately one hour. Some studies may require additional time due to specific needs. The autopsy coordinator will be able to discuss this with you. The tissue is

then processed and examined microscopically by the neuropathologist. A report will be issued to the next of kin or the appointed representative within six to twelve months.

WILL AN OPEN CASKET BE POSSIBLE AFTER AUTOPSY?

There is no disfigurement or limitation on the type of memorial service after an autopsy.

HOW DO I PLAN FOR AN AUTOPSY?

As soon as feasible, the patient and family should meet and make a decision about autopsy. The appropriate persons should pre-sign an Intent For Anatomical Gift which is then kept on file at Rush. This is not a binding contract and demonstrates intent only. The patient and family are allowed to decline an autopsy at anytime. An autopsy **CANNOT BE PERFORMED** without a signed consent form. In the event a decision to donate was not made prior to death, family members can arrange for the donation of the brain tissue after an individual's death. In this case, an autopsy consent must accompany the body or be given orally at the time of death.

State your intentions for autopsy to all appropriate health care professionals. This would include not only your attending physician but also nurses or nursing home administrators. Present them with a copy of your authorization and consent form provided by the Rush Parkinson's disease Brain Bank.