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Considering An Anatomical Donation?

Have you ever considered donating your body to science? Sometimes clients, who have been diagnosed with a debilitating illness, have a family history of disease or some other personal connection to medical research, have decided to donate their body, after death, for scientific research. Most clients, those who have had no personal connection with a particular illness or disease, cringe at the idea of an anatomical donation. Many clients will agree to organ donation with the proviso that their remains be returned to their loved ones for burial.

Full body donation is not the same as organ donation. Anatomical donations allow research institutions to discover new ways to fight serious diseases and disorders such as cancer, Alzheimer's disease and multiple sclerosis. When you donate your body to science, you may be giving surgeons a learning opportunity which may lead to the development of a more efficient technique or a new life-saving surgical procedure. Full body donation makes cutting edge developments in the fields of cancer treatment, thoracic research and neurology studies possible.

Anatomical gifts can be specific as to the institutions which are the intended recipients and can specify the particular research which the donor seeks to advance. Gifts can be matched with the needs of accredited medical research institutions which seek cadavers for research. There are limitations to the anatomical gifts which a research institution may be permitted to accept. For instance, donations where the patient suffered an infectious disease may not be viable. Depending on the particular area of research, an institution may also be unable to utilize the anatomical gift of an individual who suffered early onset Alzheimer's disease, a ruptured aneurysm, recent major surgery or an individual suffering from extremely low body weight or obesity.

In order to make your intended anatomical gift successful and truly meaningful, it is important to give some consideration, in advance, to your goal, the purpose that you wish to advance and the intended recipient. Careful written instructions should be included in your Health Care Proxy and in an Appointment to Control the Disposition of Your Remains. Talk with us and let Berwitz & DiTata LLP help you carry out your wishes.