

Brain Death & Circulatory Death

Brain Death

Death by neurological criteria (brain death) occurs in patients who have suffered an insult or injury that caused lack of blood and oxygen to the brain, ultimately resulting in irreversible cessation of all brain and brain stem function. The diagnosis of Death by Neurological Criteria (DNC) is made by the hospital physician in accordance with accepted medical standards and hospital policy. The time of the determination of DNC is the legal time of death. Approximately 70% of organ donors in New England are donors after declaration by neurological criteria.

Circulatory Death

Circulatory death occurs following the irreversible cessation of circulatory and respiratory function. Organ Donation after Circulatory Death (DCD) occurs in patients where a determination has been made for no meaningful hope for survival and whose families have made the decision to remove mechanical support and withdraw life-sustaining treatment. Approximately 30% of organ donors in New England are donors after circulatory death.