

Medical aid in dying and organ donation



You've requested medical aid in dying and are considering organ donation after your death. To help you in making a decision, this fact sheet explains how this is done.

For more information on medical aid in dying, read the health fact sheet [*Medical Aid in Dying - Understanding the steps involved.*](#)

Why choose organ donation?

In Quebec, hundreds of people are on a transplant wait list. Donors are rare. Only 1% of hospital deaths can lead to organ donation.

Each person who donates their organs after medical aid in dying can save several lives. This generous gesture can bring comfort to the donor and their loved ones.

What happens if I want to donate my organs?

- > First, the request for medical aid in dying must be accepted. Then, a liaison nurse or a coordinator from Transplant Québec will come to see you to give you information on organ donation.
- > The Transplant Québec team will meet with you a second time to answer your questions. If you agree to donate your organs, you'll have to sign a consent form. **Your family must be informed.**

- > With your care team, you'll decide when you will receive medical aid in dying.
- > If you're not hospitalized, you'll enter the hospital 7 days to 48 hours before the scheduled time of death. During this time, you'll have x-rays and blood work done. You can choose to go home after these tests or stay in the hospital if you wish.

These tests are done to check the condition of your organs.

- > Your loved ones can be present. You only have to tell the liaison nurse how many people will be there.



Note that children are welcome. Seeing their loved one at the end of life or deceased may help them in their mourning.

- > Medical aid in dying must be administered in hospital.
- > Your loved ones can bring small objects and music.
- > When the time comes, a doctor will arrive to give you medical aid in dying. Your loved ones can stay with you throughout the process.
- > If your loved ones wish, Transplant Québec will follow up with them within 24 hours after the transplants to let them know if they have been done.

At any time, you can change your mind and cancel the organ donation. This has no effect on the medical aid in dying. You can still receive it as planned.

Can I know what organs I'll be able to donate?

Yes. The team will let you know the results of the tests.



IMPORTANT

The testing doesn't necessarily find all diseases. Sometimes surgeons discover that the organs are diseased during the harvesting process. The organ donation must then be cancelled. In this case, the liaison nurse is available to support the family.

Is it possible to do an end-of-life ritual?

Yes, you can. Depending on the ritual desired, you'll be told where it can be done.



Ceremonies are held each year to honour donors and their families. Your loved ones can participate if they wish.

Will it be possible to view my body?

Yes. Even after organ donation, your body can be prepared for viewing. There will be no visible trace of the operations.

What support is there for my loved ones?

The hospital staff and the liaison nurse will support them throughout the end-of-life and organ donation processes. Your loved ones can talk with them if they have questions or need help.

In addition, a meeting can be arranged with a psychologist, social worker, or spiritual care provider, as needed. Your loved ones can talk with the care team if they are interested in this for themselves or their child(ren).

Finally, the liaison nurse will call them 2 months after your death to offer support.



Can my loved ones know who has received my organs?

No. Because organ donation is confidential, Transplant Québec can't tell your loved ones who received your organs. However, they'll be able to know which organs you donated.

Two months after the organ donation, they will also be sent a letter informing them of the recipients' condition. Your loved ones will be able to send cards to them through Transplant Québec.

Who can I contact for help or to ask questions?

For any questions about medical aid in dying, contact your care team.

☎ 514 890-8000, ext. :

If you have questions about organ donation, contact the liaison nurse.

☎ 514 890-8000, ext. 25718



USEFUL RESOURCES

Transplant Québec:

> 1 855 373-1414

> transplantquebec.ca/en

To find out how to send cards to recipients, click on The Donor's Family → Give and Receive News

Other health sheets published by the CHUM are available. Ask for those that might fit your situation.



You can also find them on our website chumontreal.qc.ca/fiches-sante



NOTEPAD



Questions



Resource people and contacts

The content of this document in no way replaces the recommendations and diagnoses made, or the treatment suggested by your health professional.

To find out more about the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal chumontreal.qc.ca

