

Philosophies and Principles of the Alabama Brain Collection

*We strive to treat those that donate their loved
one's tissue with the utmost respect and
concern....*

*We never try to persuade families to donate
tissue...*

We strive to answer all questions....

*We keep all medical records and personal
information strictly confidential, as would be
expected of research professionals...*

*We attempt to gain medical information on the
deceased for the purpose of making an accurate
research diagnosis and to gain valuable clinical
information...*

*All professional staff understands that families
are making an invaluable contribution...*

*We make every effort to disburse tissue to
researchers in a timely and scientifically
judicious fashion...*

*We are dedicated to realizing the dream of
superior treatment of mental illness.*

Alabama Brain Collection

Attention: Alabama Brain Collection
University of Alabama at Birmingham
866B Sparks Center
1720 7th Ave. South
Birmingham, AL 35294

Phone: (205) 996-9373
Fax: (205) 996-9377

www.uab.edu/alabamabraincollection

Email: rcusidor@uab.edu

Alabama Brain Collection

A Neuropsychiatric Brain Collection at
The University of Alabama, Birmingham
Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral
Neurobiology

Director

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(205) 996-9373

Staff

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We are a program dedicated to providing
a precious resource for the post-mortem
examination of psychiatric disease.
Please feel free to contact us with any
questions you may have.



Alabama Brain Collection



A Neuropsychiatric Brain Collection

Information for Families and Donors

*The Alabama Brain Collection was
established to provide post-mortem
tissue to neuroscientists studying
psychiatric illnesses or normal human
brain neurobiology.*

*The brain collection was designed in
collaboration with the Alabama Organ
Center to collect, store, and disburse
brain tissue for psychiatric research.*

Information for Donors

Helping to understand mental illness for the benefit of future generations

Your donation of brain tissue makes a world of difference. The Alabama Brain Collection, a resource of the department of Psychiatry at the University of Alabama, Birmingham, is dedicated to promoting research with brain tissue obtained post-mortem from individuals with and without mental illness. Our primary goal is to provide high-quality tissue, along with comprehensive clinical information, for hypothesis-driven research. We are not conceptualized as a brain bank with open access but are maintained and funded through collaborative research.

Tell me more about organ donation.

Organ donation in the state of Alabama is regulated under the guidelines of the Revised Uniform Anatomical Gift Act. The Anatomical Gift Act governs both live organ donations for medical transplantation and for gifts of tissue to be used in medical research.

Can I still have a viewing and a funeral if I donate tissue?

Yes. The tissue removal is performed in such a way that a viewing and open-casket funeral can be done. There is no indication that a tissue donation has occurred.

Is the brain tissue I have donated going to be used by commercial pharmaceutical companies?

This can only be done with special permission granted by the family.

For More Information:

Email us at rcusidor@uab.edu or call us at (205) 996-9373, 9 AM – 6 PM CST visit www.uab.edu/alabamabraincollection

We will do our best to answer your questions as quickly as possible.

Become a Donor:

For information on brain donation, or other tissue donation, please see the donor registration at the Alabama Organ Center. www.alabamaorgancenter.org

Other Commonly Asked Questions

What is mental illness?

Mental illnesses arise from brain diseases that cause a disturbance in thinking, mood, or behavior. Mental illness is not a personal weakness any more than diabetes or cancer. The study of brain tissue from deceased mentally ill persons is one way to discover biological basis for mental illnesses.

Do the brains of people with mental illness look different to the naked eye than the brains of "normal" people?

No, gross anatomical differences are not detectable.

How long after death does tissue have to be recovered?

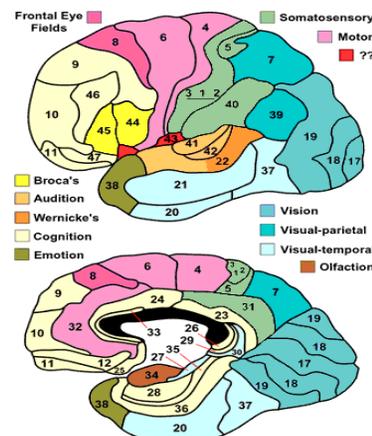
Donated tissue is precious and should be recovered within 24 hours. We understand that this is a very difficult and stressful time for families when we ask for verbal consent.

How is the brain tissue preserved?

Tissue is dissected and assigned a code usually within 24 hours of the time of death. It is then either frozen or chemically preserved for further study.

If I have more questions. Whom do I contact?

You may email the Alabama Brain Collection at rcusidor@uab.edu, reach us directly at 205-996-9373. Or visit our website: www.uab.edu/alabamabraincollection



Information for Families



Can studies be done individually on my loved one's brain?

The answer to this question is generally no. To date, no signature pathology (such as that found in Alzheimer's, Huntington's or Parkinson's disease) has been discovered that identifies people with mental illness. When we study the brains of people with mental illness, we do not "test" for mental illness per se, but we study groups of subjects and compare them to subjects without mental illness. The researchers who work with the brain tissue do not know the names of the deceased, and all identified records are kept strictly confidential.

Is there any cost to my family if I donate tissue?

No. The ABC covers all of the costs involved for tissue recovery.

Why will I be asked to participate in a phone interview?

Researchers merely want to know more about the medical and psychiatric conditions your loved one may have had, and about any medications they may have taken. The data collected during the interview are strictly confidential, and are used to diagnose the tissue for research purposes.

My loved one did not have a mental illness, why would you want to collect their brain?

We use brain tissue from individuals with no history of mental illness as "controls" to compare with tissue from individuals diagnosed with a mental illness. This makes it possible to identify brain structures or functions that are different in the disease condition. Without the brains of normal controls we would not be able to analyze tissue from patients when studying the biological basis of mental illness.

If I change my mind, will my loved one's tissue be used anymore for research?

You may change your mind about the donation and or the interview at any time. If you do change your mind, you may contact the Director of the ABC or one of the Coordinators.