

Donation after Circulatory Death (DCD)

DCD

The organ recovery process is followed by irreversible cessation of circulatory and respiratory functions. DCD donors are limited to patients who have died, or whose death is imminent, whose medical treatment no longer offers medical benefit to the patient as determined by the patient, the patient's authorized surrogate, or the patient's advance directive if applicable, in consultation with the healthcare team. A DCD donor may also be called a non-heart beating, asystolic, or donation after cardiac death donor.

Potential Candidate:

- A patient has suffered devastating and unrecoverable illness or injury and is ventilator dependent
- The family has decided to withdraw mechanical ventilation
- Death from cardiorespiratory arrest is likely to occur within acceptable timeframes following withdrawal of mechanical support.

Withdrawal of Life Sustaining Medical Treatment or Support

Care is typically withdrawn in the OR, pre-op holding area, PACU, or ICU. The OR is preferred so that there is less disruption for the family if they wish to be present during extubation, and to minimize warm ischemic time. Cardiopulmonary arrest will occur after withdrawal of life sustaining medical treatment, and must be in a timeframe that allows for organ utilization, within 60-90 minutes.

If the patient does not expire within the acceptable time frame to allow donation, the patient is returned to a predetermined nursing unit and end of life care is continued.

Declaration of Death

Death is declared in accordance with hospital policy and applicable state and local statutes or regulation and under the direction of the attending physician or designee. The donor hospital healthcare team member who is authorized to declare death must not be a member of the OPO (Donor Alliance) or the organ recovery team. The transplant team, Organ Surgery Specialist, and other individuals directly responsible for the surgical removal of organs will not be present at the time of withdrawal of life sustaining medical treatment, or support, or declaration of death.

Circulatory or cardiac death (CTOD)

CTOD is the irreversible cessation of circulatory and respiratory functions (e.g. evidenced by asystole, PEA, lack of palpable or Doppler pulse). There will be a minimum waiting period of two minutes to observe for auto resuscitation. If no auto resuscitation occurs, death may then be pronounced. Once death is pronounced according to hospital policy, the date, time, and declaration of death is recorded in the patient's medical record by the hospital physician/nurse per hospital protocol.

Organ Recovery

As soon as death has been declared, organ recovery proceeds quickly in order to minimize warm ischemic time.

Cross Clamp

When, during organ recovery, the aorta has a large clamp applied to it to cease blood circulation.