OUR OBJECTIVES

The UNITE Brain Bank researchers are dedicated to improving the understanding of chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) and the long-term effects of repetitive head trauma through neuropathological examination. Work in pathogenesis, developing biomarkers for CTE, understanding risk factors, characterizing the clinical syndrome associated with the neuropathology, and eventually discovering treatments is ongoing. Populations of interest include contact sport athletes, veterans, victims of repeated physical violence (e.g. domestic and child abuse), first responders, and law enforcement.

IRB APPROVAL

The Boston Medical Center and Boston University Medical Campus Institutional Review Board

CONTACT US

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BU CTE Center

UNITE BRAIN BANK

BRAIN DONATION GUIDE

FOR MEDICAL EXAMINERS, CORONERS, AND AUTOPSY PROFESSIONALS

INCLUSION CRITERIA

The donation process is a **time-sensitive matter**; a full-time brain donation coordinator is available 24/7, 365 days per year to arrange tissue collection.

Inclusion criteria is based on two primary factors: (1) tissue quality and (2) head trauma exposure.

1. **Tissue Quality:** At least one intact hemisphere; preferably whole, uncut brain; sections adding up to one complete hemisphere; fixed within four days post-mortem with the body in refrigeration; no life support in the last month (unless ALS). We also encourage optional tissue donation of the spinal cord, blood, and CSF.

2. **Head Trauma Exposure:**
   a. **Military:** any age, with and without athletic history, with and without combat
   b. **Age 36 and older:** at least 2 years of college-level contact sport or higher level
   c. **Age 35 and younger:** any level of contact sport
   d. **ALS:** any age, must have some contact sport history
   e. **Repeated Physical Violence:** any age, with and without athletic/military history, examples include domestic and child abuse
   f. **Second Impact Syndrome:** any age, with and without athletic history
   g. **First responder or law enforcement:** any age, with and without athletic or military history

We also welcome brain donations from 16-50 year olds without a history of head trauma to **use as controls in the study**.

MORE INFORMATION

Autopsy:
Brain in 10% formalin with brainstem and pituitary fixed for two or more weeks. Optional: blood and CSF refrigerated in 50mL centrifuge tubes; spinal cord.

Consent:
Call 24/hour line to coordinate donation. Consent form is emailed to family, with next-of-kin signature required; returned via email or fax.

RESOURCES

FOR FAMILIES:

- A written neuropathology report provided 1-year post-donation
- A conference call with the case neuropathologist
- Opportunities to share their loved one's story and connect with other brain donor families through work with the Concussion Legacy Foundation (CLF)

FOR MEDICAL EXAMINERS:

- Written neuropathology report provided 1-year post-donation with written consent from next-of-kin

THE UNITE BRAIN BANK

The UNITE Brain Bank is the largest tissue repository in the world focused on traumatic brain injury (TBI) and CTE.

The brain bank contains more than 1,700 brains, including over 800 brains that have been diagnosed with CTE using the recently defined NINDS criteria for the diagnosis of CTE.

The brain bank stores and distributes optimally prepared tissue to qualified researchers around the world and shares data and other findings with other researchers. All donated brains are preserved forever in state-of-the-art facilities and used for future studies to advance various areas of CTE research.

Dr. Ann McKee, her team of neuropathologists and other investigators have published nearly 200 academic papers focused on CTE.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: ANN MCKEE, MD

- William Fairfield Warren Distinguished Professor of Neurology and Pathology, Boston University School of Medicine
- Director, BU CTE Center
- Director, BU Alzheimer's Disease Research Center
- Chief, Neuropathology VA Boston Healthcare System