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### WHAT HAPPENS TO THE GRAFT AFTER THE TRANSPLANT?

Bone and tissue grafts don't grow. They are incorporated into the recipient's body through conversion into new bone or soft tissue.

### WILL I HAVE TO TAKE 'IMMUNOSUPPRESSANT' DRUGS AFTER SURGERY?

Unlike patients who receive organ transplants (such as kidney or heart transplants) it will not be necessary for you to take any medications specifically related to tissue rejection. You may however be prescribed other medications such as antibiotics, following your surgery.

### IS THERE ANY COST ASSOCIATED WITH RECEIVING A GRAFT?

There is no payment made to the donor or donor family for the donated material, nor is there a cost to them.

Australian law prohibits the sale of human tissue. However, a 'fee for service' is approved by the Commonwealth for each graft transplanted. These graft fees are charged to the hospital, and are fully recoverable through the private health funds, or through Medicare if the surgery is performed in a public hospital.

Fees for the supply of graft items incorporate the many costs associated with providing the material, such as laboratory costs, consumables used in the retrieval and processing of the graft, regulatory and quality system costs and administration costs such as staff wages and insurance.

For further information, please call **1800 801 997**, email [info@pluslife.org.au](mailto:info@pluslife.org.au) or visit our website.



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### INFORMATION FOR RECIPIENTS:

All you need to know about receiving a bone or tissue graft

*PlusLife is a not-for-profit organisation*



PERTH BONE & TISSUE BANK INC.

Enhancing lives because of you.

Let's talk about donation **1800 801 997**

# All you need to know about receiving a bone or tissue graft

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## WHAT IS PLUSLIFE?

PlusLife is a not-for-profit organisation which coordinates the collection, screening, storage and distribution of donated human bone and tissue graft materials for use in surgical procedures.

**Some surgical procedures require the use of bone or tissue grafts (allograft). In some instances your surgeon may be able to use your own bone and tissue (autograft) for your surgery; however for complex procedures a donated graft may be required. Your surgeon will request this from PlusLife.**

The use of allograft (tissue donated by another person) is necessary due to the limited availability of your own. By using an allograft your surgeon may be able to avoid performing a second operation to collect your own bone/tissue to use as graft. This reduces the time under anaesthetic, pain from a potential second surgical site, loss of mobility, and risk of infection at the second surgical site.

## WHERE DOES THE GRAFT MATERIAL COME FROM?

PlusLife has two donor programs:

- Patients having hip replacement surgery can donate the ball part of the hip joint (femoral head).
- During their lifetime people may indicate a wish to donate organs and tissue after their death. Like organ donation, with the consent of the next of kin, PlusLife can retrieve bone and associated tissue such as tendons, ligaments & fascia.

## HOW ARE DONORS SCREENED?

PlusLife is regulated by the Therapeutic Goods Administration, which is the auditing body of the Commonwealth Department of Health.

There are strict donor selection criteria and regulatory controls related to the screening and testing of donors and donated material. A thorough review of the donor's medical and social history is obtained prior to donation and again before graft is released for transplantation.

A variety of laboratory specimens are collected from the donor for routine testing, to exclude infectious and/or transmissible diseases.

The donor's blood is tested in the laboratory for a wide range of diseases including:

- Syphilis
- Hepatitis B & C
- HIV (AIDS)

Swabs are cultured to ensure there has been no contamination during the collection or processing of the tissue. The graft is irradiated as the last processing step.

## WHAT IS THE RISK OF TRANSMISSION OF DISEASE?

Bone and tissue transplant procedures are very common. The demand for human graft materials is growing, and bone and tissue donations assist many patients undergoing complex surgical procedures, thereby improving mobility and function.

There is a remarkable record of safety with tissue grafts and strict regulatory controls monitor the donation and transplantation of tissue in Australia.

You should be aware that even with rigorous testing procedures, there does remain a very small risk of disease transmission. However, it is very important to reiterate, it is an extremely low risk and there are exhaustive steps taken to ensure screening, testing and processing are performed according to strict regulations and guidelines.

## HOW CAN THE DONATED BONE & TISSUE BE USED?

Donated bone and tissue is very valuable for use for surgical treatment of patients who may require a transplant, e.g.

- bone tumour surgery
- spinal surgery
- hip revision surgery
- a variety of general orthopaedic procedures
- dental bone loss and maxillofacial deformity and reconstructive surgery

It is not necessary for the donor and recipient to be tissue matched, as for the transplant of organs. However, the Rhesus factor is matched where possible for female recipients of child bearing age.

Bone grafts are often used in conjunction with prosthetic implants such as metal hip implants, plates and screws. Once implanted into the recipient the bone graft does not grow, but stimulates the recipient's bone to grow into the graft to repair areas of lost bone.

## CONSENT TO RECEIVE GRAFT MATERIAL

Your surgeon, or a doctor in the hospital, will discuss with you the use of graft for your operation.

You will be required to read and sign a specific consent to receive graft. PlusLife do not provide graft for your surgery unless this consent is completed.

If you are uncomfortable with any detail in the consent form or have any questions, you should discuss this with your surgeon.

CONTINUED ON REVERSE

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