



Brain Death CPG Overview

The determination of brain death is the diagnosis of death by neurologic criteria. According to the Uniform Determination of Death Act, "An individual who has sustained either:

- irreversible cessation of circulatory and respiratory functions, or
- irreversible cessation of all functions of the entire brain, including the brain stem, is dead."

The irreversible cessation of circulatory and respiratory functions is determined by standard methods of assessing cardiac and pulmonary function. The irreversible cessation of all functions of the entire brain involves a careful and detailed assessment of neurological function. The purpose of this policy is to describe how this assessment is performed and documented.

For additional criteria, see the [Checklist for Determination of Brain Death](#).

Participation Criteria

Inclusion

Certain criteria must be met before embarking on a brain death evaluation. First, the proximate cause for the coma must be known and must be sufficient to explain the findings. In addition,

- core body temperature must be over 36°C,
- blood pressure must be in the normal range for age, and
- systemic oxygenation must be in the normal range.

Exclusion

None specified.

CPG Components

Reference Tools

- [Determination of Brain Death Reference Tool](#)
- [Checklist for Determination of Brain Death](#)

CPG Team Leader(s)

For questions/comments on the clinical content of this CPG, contact:

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