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Notice to Users of Tissue Allografts Prepared by the Tissue Bank,
Department of Orthopaedics and Rehabilitation,
University of Miami, Miller School of Medicine (UMTB),
Miami, Florida

Recent publicity regarding unfortunate events of entirely inappropriate activity relating to cadaver bone acquisition has cast a pall over the use of bone and tissue allografts in this country ("Body Snatchers of New York, How ghouls have been stealing parts from corpses in city funeral homes" New York Daily News, October 10, 2005 and "FDA orders body parts harvester to close", Associated Press. August 18, 2006). An alert was issued by the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons informing orthopaedic surgeons of the alleged criminal activities surrounding the retrieval of cadaver bone and urging its members to contact patients receiving grafts from organizations involved in processing allografts from inappropriate donors. Patients receiving such grafts may have been exposed to infectious agents because the FDA rules regarding donor selection were not followed (FDA, News PO 5-77, October 26, 2005). Also, patients might have been transplanted with tissues from donors dying of cancer. More recently an unusual organism has been recovered from a few grafts processed in one tissue bank, first made public on about November 26, 2006.

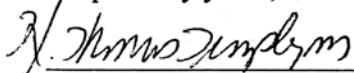
The Tissue Bank, Department of Orthopaedics, University of Miami has never received any material from "Biomedical Tissue Services" in New Jersey, from "Donor Referral Services" in Raleigh, North Carolina nor from "Musculoskeletal Transplant Foundation" in New Jersey, the sources of these potentially tainted grafts.

It has always been the University of Miami Tissue Bank's position that graft safety and quality are of utmost importance. Tissue banks must exercise control over the standards and quality of tissues retrieved and processed for human transplantation. The University of Miami Tissue Bank (UMTB) is operated and controlled by physicians. Our premise has always been that "Surgeons using the grafts on their patients and those responsible for the excision and preparation of the grafts assume joint responsibility for the care of the recipients of the graft" (Proc. 1977 Ann. Meeting, Am. Assoc. Tissue Banks, pp 70-86). We still adhere to the same principles and would like to assure the surgeons using tissue allografts prepared by UMTB that utmost care and professional judgment is exercised in the selection of tissue donors and preparation of the allografts. It is incumbent on the orthopaedic surgeon to know where the graft originates and how it has been processed. Our own studies have shown that few orthopaedic surgeons are involved in selecting organizations providing allografts and many do not know how they have been prepared (J. Arthroplasty 19:430, 2004).

To assure patient safety, orthopaedic surgeons are urged to assume a prominent role in selecting the appropriate graft, knowing the source of the allograft, and the way it was processed.

UMTB remains committed to providing safe and effective allografts for use in reconstructive surgery, steadfast in improving tissue bank practices and continued research efforts on tissue transplants.

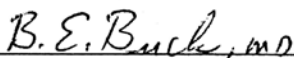
Respectfully yours,



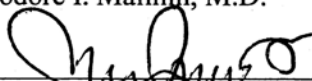
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