NTU med school to use plastinated bodies

SINGAPORE’S newest medical school at Nanyang Technological University (NTU) will pioneer the use of plastinated bodies for medical education in Singapore.

These are real human bodies donated to science, preserved via the method of plastination, and will be used to teach anatomy. These will be ready for the first batch of 54 medical students this August.

The Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, jointly set up by Imperial College London and NTU, had specially ordered the human bodies and various body parts from Germany, which were prepared to the school’s specifications.

With the use of plastinated bodies and body parts, traditionally preserved cadavers, which are in short supply in Singapore, will no longer be needed by the school.

Plastination is the process of taking organic tissue—a human body, in this case—and replacing the water in it with a liquid silicone polymer. The polymer hardens after the application of a catalyst, permanently preserving the body.

Assistant Professor Dinesh Kumar Srinivasan at the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine said the plastinated specimens are excellent tools for teaching anatomy as they are durable, safe and non-toxic.