

Be a Hero!

**...All it takes is a drop of blood 
a little bit of courage...**

Each day in Singapore, at least 6 people are diagnosed with Leukaemia, Lymphoma or any other blood related disease and for many of these patients, they will need a bone marrow transplant if they are to survive. A bone marrow donor can sometimes be found within the family, but for most patients it means searching the registers to find a suitable matched unrelated donor. The odds of finding a match is 1:20 000 within the same ethnic group.

The Bone Marrow Donor Programme is Singapore's only register of volunteer bone marrow donors. To date it has some 44 000 donors on the register which includes less than 4000 donors from Singapore minority groups. In a targeted effort to address this urgently, the BMDP is launching a Donors for the World initiative which targets to recruit 5000 volunteers within the next 3 months.



Be a Bone Marrow Donor!

Join us in the business of saving lives .
It may be the only HOPE for many patients.

For enquiries please visit us at : www.bmdp.org



THE BONE MARROW DONOR PROGRAMME
Health Sciences Authority
11 Outram Road Singapore 169078

Tel: (65) 6327 1344
Fax: (65) 6327 1279
E-mail: admin@bmdp.org

Opening Hours:
Tuesday to Friday: 9.00 am - 6.00 pm

HELP someone live again!



This publication is printed courtesy of RICOH

BONE MARROW DONOR PROGRAMME

The Bone Marrow Donor Programme (BMDP) is a Singapore-based non-profit organisation dedicated to building and managing a register of Singaporean volunteers who are willing to donate their bone marrow to patients suffering from Leukaemia, Lymphoma and other blood related diseases.

The BMDP is part of a global network of registers who are committed to finding a match for patients suffering from Leukaemia, Lymphoma and other blood related disorders. Donate generously and help us reach our target of 50 000 donors. Every \$150 raised adds one new volunteer, fully tissue-typed to the Register. Your gift will also support much needed research into bone marrow transplants.

HOW YOU CAN HELP



BE A BONE MARROW DONOR

If you are between the ages of 17 to 49 and you meet the donation health guidelines, we invite you to register as a potential bone marrow donor. A few drops of blood will be extracted by a prick of the finger to test and establish your tissue type. Your test results will then be entered into the BMDP registry and become part of a worldwide group of potential donors. If you are found to be a match for a patient, you'll be asked to donate your bone marrow. There are no known side effects to bone marrow donations as marrow or stem cells are able to replenish itself like blood.

TAKE UP OUR FUND RAISING CHALLENGE

The BMDP receives no government funding and relies on the generosity of the public to fund its life-saving work. Every \$150 raised enables us to add one new volunteer, fully tissue-typed, to the Register. That's one more life that just might be saved by your generosity. In all, it is estimated that the BMDP will need \$1 Million per year, primarily to fund the costs of tissue typing of donors, donor recruitment and financial assistance for needy transplant patients.

BE A BMDP AMBASSADOR

The BMDP is constantly looking for volunteers to help in our donor recruitment drives, fund-raising activities and community events aimed at public education and awareness. Visit us at www.bmdp.org to register as a volunteer today.

SPREAD THE WORD

Be as informed as possible and talk about it. Help us forward informative e-mail messages, flyers and join us on Facebook to keep yourself updated on our activities. Visit us at www.bmdp.org to learn more.

FAQ

Q: WHAT IS BONE MARROW?

A: Bone marrow is found in the cavities of our bones. It is a substance resembling blood that produces the body's blood cells, platelets and white blood cells – the main components of the body's immune system.

Q: DO I HAVE TO PAY FOR ANY EXPENSES?

A: All medical expenses relating to the bone marrow donation will be borne by the patient. You, as the donor, will be given medical leave for adequate rest following the donation. Throughout the whole process, you will be assigned a BMDP staff or volunteer who will be there on hand to render any assistance required.

Q: CAN I SAY "NO"?

A: A volunteer donor who is successfully matched with a transplant patient may decide not to go ahead with the process. There are legitimate reasons for saying "no", including illness, the risk involved or even fear. While the BMDP respects the decision of the matched donor, uncommitted donors give false hope to patients awaiting transplants. Once a donor gives his or her consent on the "Intent to Donate" form, the patient actually begins pre-transplant treatment. So when a donor decides to pull out at any stage after the endorsement, the patient will most likely die without a transplant. The BMDP hopes that you will be committed to your participation as a bone marrow donor.

Q: ARE THERE ANY RISKS OR SIDE EFFECTS?

A: Other than the remote chance of a reaction to anaesthesia or an infection, the risks to bone marrow harvest are minimal. Donors generally feel no pain during the bone marrow harvest as they are under general anaesthesia. After the procedure, there may be slight discomfort in the lower back lasting a few days, which is much like a muscle ache or similar to pain felt on the tailbone after a fall. With the stem cell harvest, donors might experience some flu-like symptoms, slight bone pain, or a feeling of heaviness during the injections. These discomforts usually disappear soon after the collection is completed.

Q: WHAT EXACTLY IS A MARROW / STEM CELL TRANSPLANT?

A: It is the replacement of diseased marrow with marrow from a healthy donor, infused into a patient's vein just like a blood transfusion. Within two to three weeks, the transplanted marrow/stem cells begin to produce normal blood cells in the platelet.

Q: WHEN DO I BECOME A BONE MARROW DONOR?

A: Your tissue type has to match perfectly with that of the patient's. The odds vary widely, depending on the rarity of the patient's tissue type. This means that you may never be called upon, even as a preliminary match. However, once you are identified as a compatible donor, you may be the only person who can provide the life-saving bone marrow to that patient.

Q: HOW IS BONE MARROW COLLECTED FROM A DONOR?

A: Upon identification as a compatible match, the donor will be counselled before undergoing a thorough medical examination to ascertain his or her fitness level. Currently, there are two standard methods to harvest the bone marrow. Method 1. Bone Marrow Harvest The bone marrow is removed from the back of the pelvic bone using a special needle and syringe. The entire process takes 45 to 60 minutes whilst the donor is under general anaesthesia. Though there is no surgery involved, an overnight rest in the hospital is recommended. The amount of bone marrow harvested is less than 5% of the body's marrow and this is naturally regenerated within a few weeks. Method 2. Stem Cell Harvest (Most current and common method) Stem cells are really the blood cells found in the bone marrow. The donor will be given a series of G-CSF (Granulocyte-Colony Stimulating Factor) injections to stimulate the growth of their stem cells and to mobilize them into the blood stream. A few days later, the stem cells will be collected as part of a blood donation procedure. Donations can be done in an outpatient setting as the procedure takes approximately three to five hours.