

INTERESTING FACTS

SOME STATISTICS

- Only 30% of patients searching for their lifesaving match will find one within their family. 70% of patients rely on finding their match with someone on the blood stem cell donor registry.
- 40 people every day are diagnosed with a blood cancer or blood disorder in Australia.
- Over 110,000 people in Australia are living with blood cancer, for many a stem cell transplant is their only chance for a cure.



1 person every 46 minutes is diagnosed with a blood cancer in Australia

- 80% of potential donors on the Australian Bone Marrow Donor Registry are of North Caucasian background. There are not enough people with a culturally diverse background on The Registry which means patients with a culturally diverse background will almost always struggle to find their lifesaving match.
- Only 1 in 1500 Australians on The Registry are called to be someone's lifesaving match in any given year.
- Young males are the ideal donor however only 4% of donors on The Registry are males aged 18-30.
- 80% of Australian patients receive their stem cell donation from an overseas donor.
- 30,000 people will be retiring off The Registry soon, which is why we really need young people to join!

SEARCHING FOR A MATCH

- The individual bone marrow donor registries in each country are inter-connected, so doctors can search worldwide for their patient's match.
- You must be willing to donate to anyone in the world, please note that this does not mean you need to travel overseas. Your stem cells will be collected in Australia and The Registries coordinate the rest!
- Worldwide there is also a desperate need for people from ethnic, multi-racial and indigenous backgrounds to join the registries.



We need more people from culturally diverse backgrounds to join The Registry

- Pregnant women can donate the stem cells from their baby's umbilical cord which can also be searched to save a patient's life.
- There is no harm or risk for mother or baby and you will need to ask your doctor to see if this is possible.
- You will need to request to have the cells stored on the public registry rather than privately stored so they can be searched for a patient in need.

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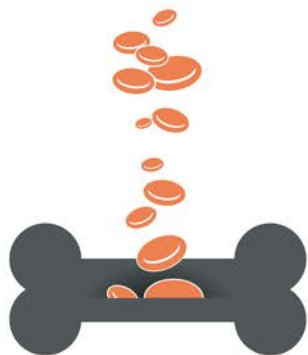
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HOW YOUR STEM CELLS CURE CANCER

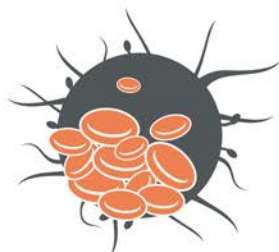
- Stem cells are the building blocks of the body. Stem cells from the bone marrow make up our immune system which plays an important role in fighting disease.
- Patients with a blood disorder like cancer do not have a normal functioning immune system. A stem cell transplant gives the patient a new immune system (the donor's immune system) to fight the disease.
- When the patient has a transplant, they receive high dose chemotherapy to eliminate their immune system in preparation to receive their donor's healthy stem cells. The new stem cells form into a new immune system which can detect the cancer and kill it.
- The patient's immune system and blood type will be replaced with their donor's immune system. This also means that the patient has to have all the same vaccinations that baby's receive after they are born!

EXCESS HEALTHY STEM CELLS ARE TAKEN FROM A MATCHING DONOR (GENERALLY TAKEN FROM THE BLOOD STREAM)

PATIENT IS GIVEN HIGH DOSE CHEMOTHERAPY TO WIPE OUT THEIR IMMUNE SYSTEM IN PREPARATION TO RECEIVE THE HEALTHY STEM CELLS



PATIENT IS GIVEN THE HEALTHY STEM CELLS TO FORM A NEW IMMUNE SYSTEM



THE HEALTHY STEM CELLS WILL TURN INTO A NEW IMMUNE SYSTEM THAT CAN KILL THE CANCER

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BONE MARROW AND STEM CELLS

- The terms stem cell transplant and bone marrow transplant are often used interchangeably which can cause confusion. Technically the correct term is associated with the way in which the stem cells or bone marrow are collected.
- If the cells are collected from the blood stream (more common method), then they are known as stem cells to be used in a stem cell transplant.
- If the cells are collected directly from the bone marrow (traditional method) then they are known as bone marrow to be used in a bone marrow transplant.
- If the cells from an umbilical cord are used, then it is known as a cord blood transplant

WAYS IN WHICH DONOR STEM CELLS CAN BE COLLECTED

- Stem cells collected from the blood stream (much like in a blood donation) is the most common method of donating your stem cells, this is used 90% of the time.
- Donating using the traditional bone marrow donation method is used 10% of the time. In this method a needle is inserted into the pelvic bone cavity to take out the bone marrow. Anaesthetic is given so you don't feel it at the time but you may feel a dull ache afterwards which can be helped with Panadol, it fades away within a few days.
- If you are asked to donate using the traditional method, it is likely that the patient receiving your bone marrow is a baby or child which makes it extra special knowing you can save a child's life!
- Donating your stem cells does not mean you lose them forever. Your body replenishes these within 1 to 4 weeks.



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