

# What happens next? Information for bone marrow donors

Bone Marrow Transplant Unit  
Information for donors

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## Important dates

Initial appointment

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Date to start G-CSF (as appropriate)

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Date to attend for bone marrow collection

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## Introduction

Tissue typing has shown that you are a suitable match to donate bone marrow to your sibling.

At your first appointment the Transplant Team will be assessing your general health and ensuring that you understand what being a donor means. This appointment is an opportunity for you to ask any questions that you may have.

You will be at the hospital for most of the day.

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**Health information and support is available at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit [www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk) for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals  
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact [InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)

## What happens at this appointment?

During the day, the doctors and nurses will be carrying out a full assessment of your health. This will include a physical examination by the doctor and further blood tests. Blood will be taken to screen for viruses, including HIV. Testing for HIV requires consent, and the doctor will discuss this with you prior to testing. Female donors may require a pregnancy test.

You may be required to have a chest X-ray and possibly a tracing of your heart called an ECG.

Sometimes the tests can give results that need further investigation. Certain results may mean that you are not suitable to be a donor. If this is the case, we will explain this to you and advise you on what happens next.

The transplant consultant will see you on your own to make sure that you are fully aware of the implications of becoming a donor and that you are happy to proceed. Although you may bring someone to the hospital with you, they will not be allowed into this part of the consultation.

It is your personal decision whether or not to proceed with the donation of cells.

Once it has been decided that you can proceed as a donor, your consultant will discuss with you how the bone marrow is collected.

The transplant team will decide a timetable so that the cells are available on the day they are needed. This will be written on the plan on the front of this booklet.

If you become unwell, develop a cold or another health problem before your donation please contact us urgently for advice, using the telephone numbers in this booklet.

## Information about bone marrow donation

Before you consent to the procedure, the doctor will explain the possible side effects to you.

Donating bone marrow involves a general anaesthetic and the most serious risk associated with donating bone marrow relates to the use and effects of the anaesthetic.

As you will be having a general anaesthetic you will be asked to have nothing to eat or drink for six hours before your appointment.

When you come into hospital, you will be seen by an anaesthetist and prepared for theatre.

Bone marrow is usually collected from inside the bones at the back of your pelvis (see diagram).

While you are under the anaesthetic, the doctor or nurse inserts a special needle into the bone.

The bone marrow is extracted into a syringe and placed in sterile containers. The marrow may be taken from a number of places along the pelvis.

The procedure takes about 40 minutes.

## After bone marrow donation

You will be given pain relief while you are still under general anaesthetic. You will also be given oxygen and you will be connected to a drip.

After the procedure a nurse will monitor your temperature, pulse and blood pressure until you are properly awake.

You will be discharged later in the day, unless your consultant decides you need to stay overnight.

## Going home after bone marrow donation

A dressing will be in place over the site of the procedure. You may remove this the day after your procedure, providing no leakage is present. You may experience a little discomfort for which mild painkillers (such as paracetamol) can be taken. Bruising, if any, will last a few days. The cells that have been removed will soon be replaced by your own bone marrow.

You should be able to return to normal activities after about seven days.

You should not feel unwell after the procedure, but you should arrange for a responsible adult to take you home in a car or taxi.

## Longer term effects

There should be no physical side effects in the longer term, but some donors find it difficult to watch their sibling's progress after the transplant, particularly if there are problems. If you are having trouble dealing with your feelings, please speak to one of the Transplant Team who will refer you for support.

## Frequently asked questions

### Is the collection always successful?

No, in about 1% of donors we cannot obtain enough cells for transplantation to go ahead. If this happens the transplant team will come and discuss with you what happens next.

### Can I drive?

You must not drive on the days of collection, and for 24 hours after a general anaesthetic.

### When can I go back to work?

After donating bone marrow, you should be fit for work after seven days. If you are having difficulty arranging for time off work, please speak to the Transplant Team, as they may be able to help you with this.

### Will I be given a follow up appointment?

Yes, we will ring you about four weeks after the donation to do a telephone consultation to make sure that you are well. However, please contact us if you have any questions or concerns before that time, using the numbers below.

## **Regulation of transplantation**

Transplantation is a carefully regulated process, and all transplant units must be licensed by the Human Tissue Authority (HTA). Further information is available on the HTA website:

[www.hta.gov.uk](http://www.hta.gov.uk)

## **Contact numbers**

If you have any questions at any time during the whole process, please phone us:

### **Leicester Royal Infirmary**

#### **Hambleton Suite**

Telephone: 0116 258 5124

Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm

#### **Osborne Day Care**

Telephone: 0116 258 5263

Monday to Friday, 8.30am - 6pm, Saturday 8.30am - 4.30pm

#### **Bone Marrow Transplant Unit**

Tel: 0116 258 5698

24 hours, 7 days a week

## Sources of further information

### **Anthony Nolan**

The Anthony Nolan website has videos about donating stem cells and bone marrow. You may find it helpful to watch these before you donate.

Website: [www.anthonynolan.org](http://www.anthonynolan.org)

### **Macmillan Cancer Support**

Freephone: 0808 808 00 00

Website: [www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)

### **Bloodwise**

Telephone: 0808 2080 888

Website: [www.bloodwise.org.uk](http://www.bloodwise.org.uk)

### **Lymphoma Action**

Telephone: 0808 808 5555

Website: [www.lymphoma-action.org.uk](http://www.lymphoma-action.org.uk)

### **Leukaemia Care**

Tel: 08088 010 444 (24 hours)

Website: [www.leukaemiacare.org.uk](http://www.leukaemiacare.org.uk)

### **Myeloma UK**

Myeloma Infoline: 0800 980 3332

Website: [www.myeloma.org.uk](http://www.myeloma.org.uk)

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔  
على هذه المعلومات بلغةٍ أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل  
જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

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Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email [equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)



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