



Why Should I Donate?

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## About stem cells

Stem cells are blood forming cells that are sometimes called "hematopoietic" or "progenitor" cells. These are immature cells that are capable of developing into any of the cells present in the bloodstream:

- red blood cells,
- white blood cells,
- platelets
- and other blood components.



Patients who have a disease that inhibits their ability to produce these cells will need a transplant of healthy stem cells from a donor.

There are two stem cell products that OneMatch Stem Cell and Marrow Network donors can provide; stem cells from the *bone marrow* and stem cells obtained from the *circulating blood*. A third stem cell product can be obtained from the *umbilical cord blood* after a baby is born and then stored in a Cord Blood Bank.

“(Stem cells) are immature cells that are capable of developing into any of the cells present in the bloodstream”



**Bone marrow** is the soft, jelly-like tissue that is found in the hollow centres of bone. Bone marrow can be likened to the factory that produces stem cells which are the building blocks of blood itself. Donors donating bone marrow will undergo a surgical procedure where the stem cells are collected from the pelvic bones.

A small number of stem cells are also released into the **circulating (peripheral) blood**. There are drugs available that can be given to a donor to dramatically increase the release of the stem cells into the circulating blood so they can be collected directly from the blood stream.

Donors may be asked to donate either bone marrow or peripheral blood stem cells depending on which product is considered to be the best choice for the patient.

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