

**A** while ago you attended a C.W. Bill Young Department of Defense Marrow Donor Program recruitment drive. At that point you registered as a potential bone marrow donor. While you may not even remember joining our program, we certainly have not forgotten you. Your swab sample was analyzed, your HLA (human leukocyte antigen) type was determined, the sample was given a numeric code so that you could remain anonymous, and it was added to a database that could be searched by physicians working in transplant centers.

As of today, **you have been identified as a potential match** for a patient in need of a life-saving marrow transplant. When you joined the registry, you did so knowing that one day you might save a life. Now someone is waiting for your response, and time is of the essence. Please read the following information and determine if you are willing to participate. **Whether or not you wish to continue, we must hear from you.** We will keep trying to contact you until we receive an answer.

Right now you are considered a potential match for a patient. If you are willing, there are several steps we must take to determine if you are the *best* match and capable of donating safely. If you do not wish to participate, please contact us right away so that we can either temporarily or permanently remove you from the registry.



If you decide to participate, you will need to complete a brief health history questionnaire over the phone to make sure that you do not have any health conditions that would make it unsafe for you to be a donor. We will then ask you to sign a consent form. If you are still associated with the military, your CO will also need to sign this form.

We will schedule an appointment for you to have some blood samples drawn at a time and location convenient to you. At your appointment, two sets of samples will be drawn, one for infectious disease testing and the other to perform confirmatory tests to determine if you are the very best match for this patient.



If you are found to be the best match, you will likely be asked to donate within the next six months. Please let us know about plans or events that may affect your availability within the next six months. Examples include: TDY, deployment, PCS plans, vacations, meetings, conferences, school, or family obligations.

Results can take up to three months depending on the patient's situation, but we will let you know if you are the best match for this patient. If it is determined that you are not the best match, we will contact you via email. If you will be asked to donate, we will contact you by phone and provide additional information.



**The first step is to contact us immediately.** We can answer questions and provide you with information about the donation process. You have already been assigned a Coordinator, whose contact information should appear in the message attached to this document. Alternatively, call 1-800-MARROW-3 or learn more at [www.salutetolife.org](http://www.salutetolife.org).

If you're selected as the best match for this patient: We will provide counseling about the patient's current condition and the type of donation being requested. All donors receive a full physical exam prior to donation to ensure they are not at additional risk from the procedure.

Once you are medically approved, we will bring you and a companion to one of our collection centers for the donation procedure. All arrangements will be made by our staff, and our program pays for donation-related expenses such as flights, hotels, and meals.

Your assigned coordinator will work with you to minimize your travel and time away from work or home. We can help with challenges such as child care and pet care. There is no cost to your command and we can assist you in requesting permissive TAD/TDY from your command, or leave from your supervisor.

There are two types of donation procedures, marrow collection and peripheral blood stem cell (PBSC) donation:

**1** Marrow collection is done by removing marrow from the donor's back hip bone using a needle and syringe. This is done under anesthesia and afterward donors feel stiff, sore, and fatigued for about a week. The procedure takes less than 5% of your marrow and your body regenerates what is donated. For this type of donation, donors typically spend about four days near the collection center.

**Important to understand:**

The type of donation requested will depend upon the patient's disease and treatment plan.

In either case, <5% of your cells are removed and most donors recover completely in about 2 weeks.

**2** PBSC donation requires a donor to receive a medication called filgrastim for 5 days. This is given by injection and is a synthetic version of a naturally occurring hormone in the body. Filgrastim increases the number of bone marrow stem cells in the blood stream. These cells can then be removed by a process called apheresis. On the last day of the injections the donor is asked to sit for a few hours in an Apheresis Center while a needle in one arm removes the blood, runs it through a very special machine that separates out the marrow cells, and the blood then returns to you. The medication may make donors feel tired and achy for about a week. For this type of donation, donors usually spend about 6 days near the collection center.

You will be able to contact the donor center and collection center staff 24 hours a day during the collection process. Donor and patient identities are kept confidential for at least a year after donation. Your Coordinator can provide additional information about patient information and what to expect.

If you wish to educate yourself about our organization and its mission, please visit [www.salutetolife.org](http://www.salutetolife.org). We understand that there are times when, whether because of work or personal commitments, you simply cannot be available. When you contact us, we can indicate in our records if you wish to be made temporarily or permanently unavailable.

**Please contact us as soon as possible, even if you cannot donate!**



[www.salutetolife.org](http://www.salutetolife.org) \* 1-800-MARROW-3 \* 11333 Woodglen Drive, Suite 300, Rockville MD 20852

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