

# Are you someone's perfect match?

## Join the Australian Bone Marrow Donor Registry

### Why join the Australian Bone Marrow Donor Registry?

Every 40 minutes someone in Australia is diagnosed with blood cancer. By joining the Registry, there's a chance that you could one day be matched with someone who needs your specific blood stem cells to survive. That's a truly powerful thing.

### Am I eligible?

You can join the Registry to give blood stem cells if you're aged 18-35 and in good health (and meet a few other eligibility checks).

To double check that you're eligible, you'll need to complete an enrolment form.

### Did you know?

There's scientific evidence that younger people make the most successful donors for patients. So, we need 18-35 year olds to register and increase their chances of finding the best possible match.

Ethnic diversity is also really important, because patients are more likely to find a match with a donor from the same ethnic background.

### Why are blood stem cells important?

It sounds a bit complicated, but it starts with bone marrow. That's the soft tissue inside bones. It makes stem cells, which then make red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets. If someone's bone marrow gets damaged (e.g. from leukaemia or a blood disorder), a stem cell transplant is often their only hope for a cure.

The problem? Stem cells have to be from a donor who closely matches the patient — and only 30% of patients have a match in the family. That means a blood stem cell transplant from a complete stranger (like you) could be the only hope for 70% of patients.

### How do I join?

You can get started by filling in an ABMDR enrolment form at an Australian Red Cross Lifeblood donor centre.

Just book in for a normal blood donation at [donateblood.com.au](http://donateblood.com.au) and you can give a blood sample to join the registry at the same time.

We'll be able to check your tissue type from your sample.

### What happens once I'm registered?

#### Your tissue type is put into an international database...

Our Australian database is linked to the worldwide registries (but your identity is kept private). When a patient anywhere in the world needs a transplant, the registries are checked for a matching donor. If that's you, you may be able to save a life.

#### ...and we contact you if you're a match

You'll only hear from us if you're a match — only 1 in 1,500 potential Aussie donors are asked to donate in a year.

### How does the donation work?

There are two ways to give blood stem cells. For 9 out of 10 people, it's just like a plasma donation (but in a hospital). For the rest it's a short surgical procedure, which requires general anaesthesia, to take bone marrow from the back of your hip. The patient's doctor will request their preferred method, but it's up to you and your doctor to make the final decision. No matter how you do it, you'll feel incredibly special knowing you've helped save someone's life.

Head to [abmdr.org.au/collection](http://abmdr.org.au/collection) for more info about how donation works.

### Get in touch

If your contact details change, you want to be removed from the registry, or you just need some more info, head to [abmdr.org.au](http://abmdr.org.au) or give Lifeblood a call on **13 14 95**.

