



# The Sunflower Fund: Donor Information

Everything you need to know in order to join the South African Bone Marrow Registry (SABMR)

How to become a donor:

1



Once you've read the info call 0800 12 10 82 / +27 21 7010661

2



We ask you medical questions; if you are eligible, we fill in your form

3



We email your form to you and direct you to your closest recruitment clinic

## Do not register as a donor if you:

- Think you might need a test for HIV, Hepatitis-B (HBV) or Hepatitis-C (HCV)
- Have injected yourself (even once) with illegal or non-prescription drugs
- Lead a sexually unsafe lifestyle
- Have been exposed to hepatitis or HIV by contact with a family member or through your job
- Get regular tattoos or piercings
- Are pregnant or had a baby in the last year
- Have had cancer
- Have a phobia for needles

**Are you?**

- Committed to helping anyone
- Between 18-45 years old
- In general good health (not at risk of contracting hepatitis or sexually transmitted diseases)
- Over 50kg and with a BMI <40
- A blood donor (Preferable but not necessary)
- Prepared to remain on the SABMR until you're 60 years old



## Joining for someone specific?

The most natural reaction is to want to help a friend who needs a bone marrow stem cell transplant. However, it is important that donors who register on the SABMR realise that they have to be available for whoever they match and cannot register specifically for one person. With so many patients requiring this procedure, let's give them all a chance of finding their life-saving match.



## How are stem cells donated?

The process is actually very similar to donating platelets. Blood is drawn from one arm through a needle and filtered through a cell separator machine, bone marrow stem cells are collected from your blood into a bag. The rest of your blood is returned via a needle in your other arm. This process takes +/- 4-6 hours and might need to be done on two consecutive days.



## Why is your Ethnicity Important?

Donor matches depend on tissue types, not blood types and these inherited genetic characteristics are often more frequent in a particular race group. It is therefore important that people of all races register as donors, so that all patients have the opportunity of finding a life-saving donor match. The chance of finding a match is 1:100 000.

4



It only takes 2 test tubes of blood to register on the SABMR

5



Blood is tested and results are sent to the SABMR

6



The SABMR will post your donor card 6-8 weeks later



Share a Little,  
Save a Life

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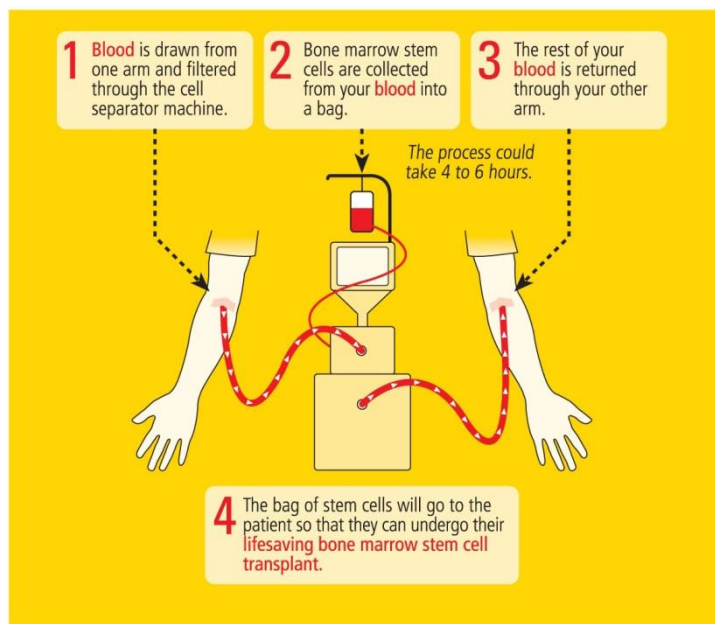
## The SABMR will then only contact you if you are a match...

**So, what happens if you are found to be a match in the future?** The medical procedure for obtaining stem cells from the blood is called a peripheral blood stem cell collection. Firstly, you will undergo a full medical examination and if you are fit to donate and still in agreement, growth factor (G-CSF)\* injections will be administered for 5 days prior to donating stem cells. These will increase the production of the stem cells in the bone marrow, releasing them into your bloodstream. This medical procedure with some discomfort entails you being connected to the machine by an intravenous line (similar to donating platelets) for 4 – 6 hours, possibly on two consecutive days. The precious bone marrow stem cells are filtered out of your blood and your own blood is then returned to you. There is no cost involved for you the donor other than your time.

**GENERAL FACT:** As with many diseases, normal healthy individuals, during their lifetime, could be at risk for developing cancer, including leukaemia, lymphoma or other blood diseases and in many cases the cause is unknown.

**\*WHAT IS THE G-CSF HORMONE?** G-CSF is the naturally occurring growth hormone used to increase the number of circulating stem cells in the peripheral blood.

**ARE THERE ANY RISKS WITH THE G-CSF HORMONE?** G-CSF stimulates normal blood cell growth and in some patients with cancer or abnormal blood cells, it has been shown to stimulate leukaemic blood cells within these patients. Studies following large numbers of unrelated donors have shown that the risk of developing cancer within several years after the use of G-CSF is not increased compared to donors not receiving G-CSF.



## Q: Who pays for the test?

**A:** **The Sunflower Fund pays R2000 for each blood test.** We depend largely on donations from the public so we do ask donors to consider donating towards the cost of the test. We will however sponsor the full test cost, should you be unable to contribute.

If you can contribute, this will free up our funds to pay for more donors; the more donors on the SABMR the better the chance patients have of finding a match.

There are various donation options:

R350 / R750 / R1400 / R2000

After completing your application form we will ask whether you are in a position to make a financial donation or whether you need to be sponsored by The Sunflower Fund and where applicable, give you your unique reference number. If you are not able to make a donation The Sunflower Fund will sponsor your test cost. If you choose to have your full test sponsored you will receive your form via email in 2 - 3 weeks. Section 18A Certificates can be requested for all financial donations.

Donors aged 46-50 may join the SABMR but regrettably The Sunflower Fund cannot sponsor them, so they would need to pay the full cost of the test (R2000) themselves.

## Banking details:

**Account Name:** THE SUNFLOWER FUND  
**Bank:** ABSA 405 183 4719  
**Ref:** Sunflower Ref. Number (given on registration)



The Sunflower Fund

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For more information call  
0800 12 10 82 toll free or  
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SABMR



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find your perfect match"  
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