
Be The Match® Media Fact Sheet

Our Mission: Delivering Cures for Blood Cancers

- For patients with blood cancers like leukemia and lymphoma, and other life-threatening diseases, a cure exists. Be The Match is a community of donors, volunteers, health care professionals and researchers who deliver cures by helping patients get the life-saving marrow or umbilical cord blood transplant they need. Our passion to save lives drives us to help more patients survive each year.
- Every **three minutes someone** is diagnosed with a blood cancer. *SOURCE: Seer.*
- **Seventy percent of patients do not have a fully matched donor in their family.** They depend on Be The Match.
- Be The Match facilitates more marrow and cord blood transplants every year, including nearly 6,400 transplants in 2015, for a total of **74,000 transplants** since 1987.
- Every dollar we raise helps more patients afford transplant, adds potential marrow donors to the registry and funds our life-saving research.

Connecting Patients with their Donor Match

- The Be The Match Registry® is the world's largest and most diverse donor registry. We have **more than 13.5 million** potential marrow donors and **more than 225,000** cord blood units on the Be The Match Registry. Every search through our organization provides patients with access to **nearly 27 million** potential donors and **more than 680,000** cord blood units on the Be The Match Registry and global registries worldwide.
- The best transplant outcomes happen when a patient's human leukocyte antigen (HLA, or tissue type) and the HLA of a registry member or cord blood unit closely match. Patients are most likely to match the tissue type of someone who shares their ethnic background.
- A patient's likelihood of having **a matched, available donor** on the Be The Match Registry ranges from **66 percent to 97 percent**, depending on their ethnic background.
**A breakdown of likelihood by ethnic background is available upon request.*
- A patient's likelihood of having **at least one matched umbilical cord blood unit** on the Be The Match Registry ranges from **81 percent to 99 percent**, depending on their ethnic background.
**A breakdown of likelihood by ethnic background is available upon request.*

Donating Marrow, Peripheral Blood Stem Cells (PBSC) or Umbilical Cord Blood

- A marrow or cord blood transplant replaces a patient's unhealthy blood-forming cells with healthy ones. The cells used in transplants come from three sources: marrow, peripheral blood stem cells (PBSC) and umbilical cord blood.
- Adults may be asked to donate one of two ways:
 - About **77 percent** of the time, a patient's doctor requests a PBSC donation, a non-surgical, outpatient procedure similar to donating platelets or plasma.
 - About **23 percent** of the time, a patient's doctor requests marrow, a surgical, outpatient procedure that takes place at a hospital. General or regional anesthesia is always used.
- About **1 in every 430** U.S. Be The Match Registry members go on to donate to a patient.
- A third source of cells used in transplants is cord blood, which is collected from the umbilical cord and placenta immediately after a baby is born. It is stored at a public cord blood bank and the cord blood unit is listed on the Be The Match Registry. There is no cost for parents to donate cord blood.

Joining the Be The Match Registry

- The public can join the Be The Match Registry in person or online at BeTheMatch.org. To join, people need to meet age and health guidelines and be willing to donate to any patient in need. Registration involves completing a health history form and giving a swab of cheek cells.
- More young people of diverse racial and ethnic heritage are needed now to help patients searching for a match. People between the **ages of 18 and 44** are most urgently needed since they are requested by transplant doctors more than **95 percent** of the time, and research shows that these donors provide the greatest chance for transplant success. People between the ages of 45 and 60 who want to join the registry are welcome to do so online with a \$100 tax-deductible payment.
- On average, **more than 30,000** new potential donors join the Be The Match Registry in the U.S. each month. **Nearly 537,000** new potential donors joined in the U.S. in 2015, of which **40 percent** identified as people of color.
- The most important thing registry members can do is stay [committed](#) to donating if identified as the best match for a patient. As volunteers, people are never under any legal obligation to donate and their decision is always respected. However, because a late decision not to donate can be life-threatening to a patient, we ask everyone to think seriously about their commitment before deciding to join the Be The Match Registry.
- Other ways to save lives include making direct financial contributions, donating [cord blood](#), volunteering or spreading the word about the need for more 18 to 44-year-olds to join the registry. Those who have already joined the Be The Match Registry can also help by updating their contact information.

Composition of the Be The Match Registry by Ethnic Background

Ethnic Background	Total Number and % Potential Adult Donors	Total Number and % Cord Blood Units
African American or Black	More than 802,000 6%	Nearly 18,000 8%
American Indian/Alaska Native	Nearly 139,000 1%	424 0.2%
Asian	More than 816,000 6%	Nearly 23,000 10%
White	More than 7.8 million 57%	More than 135,000 60%
Multiracial	More than 532,000 4%	More than 21,000 9%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Nearly 19,000 0.1%	237 0.1%
Hispanic or Latino	Nearly 1.3 million 9%	More than 43,000 19%

- Nearly **40 percent** of the total Be The Match Registry membership includes citizens of other countries. * *The above chart includes U.S. and international Be The Match Registry members. U.S.-only numbers are available by request.*
- Matching the tissue types of patients to donors is a complex process, far more complex than matching blood types. While most people of color are actually over-represented on the Be The Match Registry when compared to the U.S. population, many patients still do not have a matching donor due to the sheer genetic diversity of each group. Be The Match continually strives to increase the size and ethnic diversity of the registry to improve all patients' chance for a cure.

Our media relations staff is available to provide additional information 24-hours a day and can be reached at 612-817-6442 or media@nmdp.org. Please note the official name of our registry is the Be The Match Registry®.