



RIK

ASIAN BLOOD STEM DONOR

URGENTLY REQUIRED

THIS IS A SIMPLE QUICK PAINLESS PROCEDURE

- ▶ **RIK** is married with two children and has **LEUKAEMIA**, he is in desperate need of a **BLOOD STEM CELL DONOR**. There is a **SHORTAGE** of **ASIAN DONORS** on the register and so we are appealing for people to come forward so we can find a **LIFE SAVING MATCH** for **RIK**.
- ▶ The **BEST MATCH** for Rik is likely to be **ASIAN** aged between **18-40**.
- ▶ To join the register all you need to do is visit the website below, fill out a form and then send in a saliva sample in the kit provided.
- ▶ Your saliva is tested and if you are a match for Rik or anyone else you will be asked to **DONATE**. Most people donate via a method similar to **GIVING BLOOD**.
- ▶ You can join the register by completing an application online. www.anthonynolan.org/register
- ▶ **IF** you are **OVER 41** you can still become a **STEM CELL DONOR** by becoming a **BLOOD DONOR**, simply tell the nurse you also wish to be a stem cell donor. To find out more please go to www.blood.co.uk/ to sign up.

To register go to www.anthonynolan.org/register

YOUR HELP COULD SAVE RIK'S LIFE

**ONLY 4% OF POSSIBLE DONORS ON ANTHONY NOLAN BLOOD STEM REGISTER ARE ASIAN
- LETS INCREASE THE CHANCES FOR EVERYBODY**



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RIKS STORY

I was first diagnosed with **Acute Myeloid Leukaemia (AML)** in 2009; prior to the diagnosis I had always considered myself to be very **fit and active**, a **regular gym goer** and **football player**. The diagnosis was nothing short of devastating not just for me but my family. We went from a relatively busy "normal" life into a world of uncertainty about the future.

I was thrown into five months of **intensive chemotherapy** followed by **months of recovery**, prior to this I had never spent even a day in hospital. Following treatment I eventually returned to work and picked up the threads of my life... as you can imagine it was a case of looking over "**our shoulder**" in case the disease returned. I was closely monitored following the treatment, the hospital appointments were as you can imagine extremely stressful. Statistically the likelihood of the AML returning diminished over time with two years being a particularly significant milestone. We eventually reached this point and we had dared to start to believe the nightmare was behind us. Unfortunately this was not to be the case...

I was **recently re-tested** following what appeared to be a **simple bout of flu**; I went for routine blood tests which to cut a long story short culminated in receiving the bombshell that the **leukaemia had returned**. I am **now back** in hospital undergoing **chemotherapy** however I will as part of the **treatment** require a **bone marrow transplant**. I **DO NOT** have a **sibling match** so will require a **stem cell donor**...a search of the database to find a suitable match is currently in progress however I have been advised there are **significantly fewer donors** on the **register** from the Asian sub-continent.

I wondered **why** this was, given the vast numbers of "**British Asians**" (me included) living in the **UK**.

I can only surmise that it is possibly a fear of the donation process which has in the past been shrouded in **myth and misinformation**; I have since learnt a great deal about the process of becoming a donor and whereas at one time it was an onerous process medical advances have now made it fantastically **simple** and **straightforward**.

To initially register you **simply** provide a **sample of saliva**, if at some future date you were **asked to become a stem cell donor** the process itself is little more than an **enhanced blood donation**. The impact on the donor is minimal, certainly there are **no adverse health implications**, your body will **simply recuperate**... but the outcome for the recipient is nothing short of **life saving**.

I mentioned earlier that I have a family; I have a **wife** and **two daughters** as well as my extended **family** and **friends**, I **value** them greatly and want to be around to **help** and **support** them. Take a good look around at **your** own family and friends and I'm sure you feel likewise. This is an awful disease, it can hit **anyone, healthy, old, and young** it **does not discriminate**. It could **strike anyone**... taking a little time out now to register (honestly it is so simple) will have minimal impact on your life but you can rest in the knowledge that if you become a donor you could **SAVE A LIFE**.

REGISTER NOW and address the shortfall in **ASIAN DONORS**, we should not need to conduct worldwide searches for donors when there are **so many of us** here, ultimately we will all benefit. Registering is an "**investment**" in our collective futures whether it is family friends or the wider **Asian community**.

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COMMON QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

WHAT IS LEUKAEMIA?

Leukaemia is cancer of the blood caused by mutation in a cell of the bone marrow. Patients with leukaemia sometimes require a transplant of stem cells from a donor.

WILL IT HURT TO DONATE MY STEM CELLS?

NO. It is a simple process and in the vast majority of cases is given by donating through a vein in your arm very much like giving blood.

ARE THERE ANY SIDE EFFECTS... WILL I NEED TIME OFF WORK?

NO. There are no long term side effects; you may experience mild flu like symptoms which last just a couple of days.

HOW DO I DONATE...WHAT IS THE PROCESS?

- ▶ You will need an injection over three days. These injections help your body produce and release extra stem cells into your blood. These injections can be given by a family member or a nurse arranged to come to your home or place of work.
- ▶ You'll then go to a local hospital to make the donation but you won't need an overnight hospital stay or a general anaesthetic.
- ▶ Your blood is taken through a tiny tube in your arm, and the cells are donated by passing the blood through a machine. The process takes about four hours.

SO HOW DO I REGISTER?

- ▶ Joining the register is easy and **ANYONE AGED 18-40** can sign up simply by visiting <http://www.anthonynolan.org/register>
- ▶ You will be sent a kit in the post, you simply send back **A SALIVA SAMPLE** and you will be placed on the register. **THAT'S IT!...**
- ▶ If you are over 41 you can still become a stem cell donor by becoming a blood donor, simply tell the nurse you also wish to be a stem cell donor. To find out more please go to www.blood.co.uk/ to sign up.

WILL IT COST ME ANYTHING?

All reasonable out-of-pocket expenses including paying for and arranging all travel and accommodation requirements will be **reimbursed**.

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