

# Black/African American Donors Needed to Save Lives



## Blood Cancer Hits Black/African American Communities Harder

- 75% of Black/African American blood cancer patients never find a lifesaving donor and will not survive.
- Black/African Americans have the highest death rate and shortest survival time of any racial/ethnic group in the United States for most cancers.<sup>1</sup>
- Cancer is the second highest cause of death for the Black/African American population.<sup>1</sup>
- Black/African Americans are twice as likely as Caucasians to be diagnosed with and die from multiple myeloma, a cancer of the blood plasma.<sup>2</sup>
- Among Black/African American children, the incidence of cancer is currently rising, particularly Hodgkin's lymphoma.<sup>3</sup>
- Sickle Cell Disease occurs among about 1 out of every 365 Black/African-American births.<sup>4</sup>
- Among Black/African Americans, 1 in 2 men and 1 in 3 women will be diagnosed with some form of cancer during their lifetime.<sup>1</sup>
- The difficulty of finding matching donors is due to the low numbers of Black/African Americans in the registry.

Sources: 1) American Cancer Society, Cancer Facts and Figures for African Americans 2016-2018  
 2) National Cancer Institute, Cancer Disparities  
 3) Medscape, Cancer Rates in Kids: Looking Behind the Numbers  
 4) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

## Why Ethnicity Matters

Ethnicity is important because tissue type is inherited, like hair and eye color, so people from the same racial and ethnic background offer the best chance for a match. Yet many ethnicities have low representation in the registries, leaving those patients with little possibility of a lifesaving transplant. Increasing diversity in the registry is an urgent need.



Caucasian

**2%**

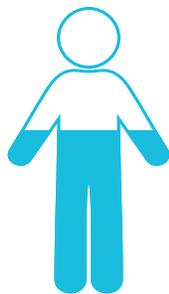
Cannot find a matching donor



Hispanic/Latino

**55%**

Cannot find a matching donor



Asian American

**60%**

Cannot find a matching donor



African American

**75%**

Cannot find a matching donor



Multi-Racial

**75%**

Cannot find a matching donor

A high percentage of many ethnicities cannot find a matching donor.



# Services We Provide

## About Donors

The most requested donors are between 18 and 25 years old, as younger donors are healthier and produce more of the bone marrow and stem cells needed for transplant. Males are often requested over females, as due to their larger physical size, they produce greater numbers of stem cells. Females may not donate while pregnant or nursing, due to changes in the immune system that can result in medical complications for the recipient.

Many people think marrow donation is painful, but that's not true! More than 80% of donations are peripheral stem cells that are in the blood, collected in the same way as donating blood platelets. Less than 20% of donations collect bone marrow from the hip, most often for donation to a child, while you are under general anesthesia. Both are outpatient procedures, and nearly every donor tells us the process was much easier than they expected.

### PATIENT ADVOCACY

- **Patient Education:**  
Finding a match can be complicated, so we help educate you about the process of finding a donor and undergoing transplant.
- **Extended Family Study:**  
Thirty percent of patients have a matching family member who can donate, so immediate testing is crucial.
- **Unrelated Donor Search:**  
We run a preliminary search of the worldwide donor database to identify what potential matches already exist.
- **Pre-emptive Extended Typing:**  
When potential matches are found in Gift of Life's registry, we facilitate pre-emptive extended testing of these possible donors.
- **Unrelated Donor Recruitment:**  
Tissue type is affected by ethnicity and race. We help identify target populations for a public recruitment campaign if no other matches are found.

### DONOR RECRUITMENT

We recruit volunteer donors on college campuses, at corporations, and at public events across the United States.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The more our communities learn about blood cancers and the chance of a cure offered by marrow transplants, the more donors we can find and the more lives will be saved. Please invite us to bring our program to your workplace, school, congregation, or other organization - we need your help to save more lives!



**1 in 200**

Americans will receive a marrow or blood stem cell transplant in their lifetime

**1 in 5**

donor matches are selected for a transplant

**1 in 3**

patients for whom Gift of Life conducts donor searches for are children

**1 in 200**

male donors (18-30) will be called as a match