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SAVE
A LIFE Learn More
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HOW DO YOU BECOME A REGISTERED MARROW DONOR?

You must:

- Be between the ages of 18 and 60
- Meet the health guidelines
- Be willing to donate to any patient in need

It takes fewer than 15 minutes to register as a marrow donor (10 minutes for paperwork; two minutes to swab your mouth with Q-tips).
Above: SUNY Upstate medical students join the marrow donor registry. Alice Chen is completing forms; Tesha English is collecting tissue samples by swabbing her mouth with a Q-tip, a key component to registering as a marrow donor.



THE BEST OF CARE, RIGHT HERE AT HOME

Eunique Darby and Edward Swain are treated at the Waters Center for Children's Cancer and Blood Disorders at University Hospital in Syracuse. The Center serves the 20-county region that extends from the Canadian border to Northern Pennsylvania. The 25-person multidisciplinary staff – comprised of pediatric hematologists/oncologists, pediatric nurse practitioners, nurses, research associates, child life specialists, a social worker, a family therapist, and an education specialist – cares for more than 700 children with various malignancies and blood disorders. A member of the prestigious Children's Oncology Group (COG), the Center is on a par with the nation's finest.

Pictured are several of the Center's staff members, including, from left: Diane Groth RN, CPNP; Shabella Blackshear CT; Jeanette Vaccaro Snyder RN; Tracy Devoise CT; and Richard Sills MD, director.



For more information on the National Marrow Donor Program or the Waters Center for Children's Cancer and Blood Disorders, call University Hospital's Health Connections, **800.464.8668**.

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SUNY Upstate Medical University students and staff gather on behalf of the national marrow donor registry.
Front row, from left: Khailia Grant and Kavita Ketwaroo, medical students. *Second row, kneeling and seated:* Tanya Hicks, clinical case manager; Stephanie Jones, medical student; Wanda Thompson PhD, senior associate vice president for operations; Cadésa Ramharrack, medical student; and Esther Ihezue, medical student. *Third row, seated or kneeling:* Nakeia Chambers, director of student multicultural affairs; Trymeter Carter, environmental health and safety coordinator; Josephine Dunn Junius, medical student; Jewel Appleton, medical student; and Don Terry, assistant manager of distribution services. *Back row, standing:* Twana Jackson, medical student; Dianna Bryan, medical student; Iyabo Muse, medical student; Ikenna Anaka, medical student; Latoya Lawrence, medical student; Phyllis Bazen NP, Acute Pain Services; Perika De Roché, medical student; Escola Echols, security officer; and Willie White, hospital receiving manager.



Above & Beyond

SUNY UPSTATE ANSWERS THE CALL FOR MARROW DONORS

When news spread that Eunique Darby, a patient in the Waters Center for Children's Cancer and Blood Disorders, was in need of a bone marrow transplant, SUNY Upstate students and staff swung into action. E-mails were sent out and, within one day, 30 students and employees gathered to begin promoting bone marrow donor registry drives on the SUNY Upstate campus.

The day the group met to organize the drives, Edward Swain, another patient at the center, learned that he, too, needed a bone marrow transplant, adding even more urgency to the local drive for marrow donors.

Nationally, there are 6 million registered donors on the national marrow donor registry, and 6,000 patients in need of a marrow transplant or cord blood unit. But, because donor matches are found among people who share the same ethnic heritage, SUNY Upstate organizers know that there may not

be a marrow donor for either Eunique or Edward unless they help recruit new donors. Today, only 8 percent of registered donors are African American. Significant donor shortages also exist among people who are Native American, Asian, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, or of mixed ethnic heritage.

In response to these shortages, the National Marrow Donor Program has launched the "Your Ethnicity. Your Gift of Life." campaign to encourage people of color to join the registry. And their message is working.

Don Terry, assistant manager of central distribution at SUNY Upstate, was among the group that volunteered to become a registered bone marrow donor.

What motivated him?

"I've got a 15-year-old daughter," answers Terry. "How could I look at these kids and not do something to help them beat cancer?" ■

WHO NEEDS A MARROW TRANSPLANT?

Eunique Darby, 14, and Edward Swain, 19, are being treated for acute lymphoblastic leukemia at the Waters Center for Children's Cancer and Blood Disorders at University Hospital. Eunique was diagnosed at age 10, Edward at age 8. This year, both had second cancer relapses. At this point, their best chance for beating cancer is a marrow transplant.

EUNIQUE'S STORY

by Enid Darby, mother
Supervisor, Syracuse University Law Library

“**W**hen my daughter, Eunique, had her second cancer relapse in February, we knew that a bone marrow transplant was her best hope for a cure. Recently, my family and I walked into Weiskotten Hall* and into a room packed with medical students, staff from the Center for Children's Cancer and Blood Disorders, and other Upstate employees, all gathered to help organize bone marrow drives at SUNY Upstate. We are grateful to them and to all the people who have reached out to help us find a marrow donor for Eunique: the Southwest Community Center, Phi Beta Sigma fraternity and the National Society of Black Engineers at Syracuse University, the House of God Church, the William G. Pomeroy Foundation, and, especially, Helen Hudson and the Mothers Against Gun Violence. It will take six to eight weeks for the National Marrow Donor Program to process the tissue samples to find out if any of these generous people are matches for Eunique, Edward or any of the thousands of patients in U.S. in need of bone marrow transplants. While we wait, all I can say is, ‘Thank you.’”

*one of SUNY Upstate's campus buildings



Eunique is a freshman at Corcoran High School in Syracuse

Because tissue types are inherited, patients are most likely to match someone of their own race or ethnicity. There's a high demand for donors who are African-American, Native American, Asian, Hispanic, mixed heritage, and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander.

EDWARD'S STORY

by Sandra Hudson PhD, Research Assistant Professor
Department of Radiation Oncology, SUNY Upstate Medical University

“**I**wish I could donate my bone marrow to Edward, but matches are found among people who share the same ethnic heritage. I met Edward 12 years ago, on what would have been my late son Michael's next birthday. That day, I purchased a toy, and visited our Center for Children's Cancer and Blood Disorders and asked if there was a patient who would like a brand new remote-control toy motorcycle. The staff introduced me to Edward, who had just been diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia, the same condition that, months earlier, had taken my son. Edward smiled, and I knew immediately that this was the beginning of a new relationship. Since that day, Edward has been an important part of my life. He has been living with my husband and me for the past two years in order to finish school, and he will graduate from Baker High School in Baldwinsville this June. He is planning to attend college to pursue a career in nursing. He wants to provide the same kind of compassionate care that he has received at the hospital during his own treatment. When Edward's leukemia returned in 2004, it required two more years of chemotherapy to put him in remission again.”



Recently, we found out that Edward has relapsed a second time. A bone marrow transplant is now his best chance for a cure. Someone out there can provide this opportunity to Edward. In order to find that person, he or she will need to be tested and enter the marrow registry.”