



NHS

Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Foundation Trust: Information for young people and families

Blood tests for stem cell donation

This information sheet from Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH) explains why blood samples are needed for laboratory testing before you donate stem cells and what is involved when you are asked to give a sample.

Why do I need a blood test?

Before donating stem cells, we need to test your blood for infections including Hepatitis, Syphilis, Human T-cell Lymphotropic Virus (HTLV) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). This is to ensure that your donation is safe to give to another person.

What happens?

A doctor or nurse will use a needle to take a small amount of blood (sample). They will clean the area before putting in the needle. The needle will go into a vein on the inside of your elbow, your wrist or the back of your hand. We can use a cream or cold spray to make the area numb first – please ask us if you want this.

When the doctor or nurse has collected enough blood, they will remove the needle. They will ask you to press on the area. This is to stop you getting a bruise on your arm. They will then give you a plaster or bandage to put on your arm. You should keep this on for about 30 minutes and then remove it.

If you feel weak or dizzy during the blood test, tell the person taking the blood.

How much blood will be taken?

This will vary, but it will normally be about 10mls, which is about two teaspoons.

When can I go home?

You can usually go home straight after your blood tests.

When can I find out the results?

Your doctor may ask you to come to visit when the results are back. If any of the tests are positive, we will tell you, carry out further tests and offer you counselling and clinical follow up as necessary.

Who do I ask if I would like more information?

If you would like more information, please ask the doctor or nurse who saw you in clinic.

Compiled by the Transfusion Practitioner in collaboration with the Child and Family Information Group
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