

#GetSwabbed

Stem Cells for Life digital toolkit



**Canadian
Blood
Services**

BLOOD
PLASMA
STEM CELLS
ORGANS
& TISSUES



@CanadasLifeline

We need young healthy males and individuals with diverse ethnic backgrounds aged 17—35 to #GetSwabbed and join Canada’s national stem cell registry.

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Background

Each year, hundreds of patients in Canada with diseases such as leukemia, lymphoma and aplastic anemia need a stem cell transplant to save their life – many of whom are facing challenges finding a matching donor.

Less than 25 per cent of patients are successfully matched with someone in their own family. The other ~75 per cent must rely on an unrelated volunteer donor to save their life. Patients are more likely to find a match with a donor who shares their ethnic background. Currently, only 31 per cent of Canada's national stem cell registry is ethnically diverse, making it harder for some patients to find a match.

Furthermore, younger stem cell donors provide better patient outcomes and male donated stem cells decrease the possibility of post-transplant complications. Half of all stem cell donors chosen to help Canadian patients every year are male, yet only 20 per cent of the stem cell registry is comprised of male donors. Hence the greater need for male registered donors.

The steps to join the registry are simple. Not everyone who registers will be matched to a patient and asked to donate, but each registrant provides hope for those waiting.

Basic facts about stem cells

What are stem cells?

Stem cells – specifically blood stem cells – are immature cells that can develop into:

- red blood cells – carry oxygen throughout the body
- white blood cells – fight infections
- platelets – control bleeding

Why are stem cells needed?

Over 80 diseases and disorders can be treated with a stem cell transplant including leukemia, lymphoma and aplastic anemia. Our bodies are constantly manufacturing these cells and without them, the consequences can be life-threatening.

How are stem cells donated?

There are three sources of blood stem cells for a stem cell transplant:

- Peripheral blood stem cells found in circulating blood – donors receive granulocyte colony stimulated factor (G-CSF) injections to increase the number of blood stem cells in their bloodstream. Blood is then drawn with a needle in a non-surgical procedure done at the hospital. The stem cells are separated, and the remaining blood components are returned to the donor.

- Bone marrow - a day surgical procedure (operation) performed under general anesthesia where hollow needles withdraw bone marrow stem cells from the back of the hip bones.
- Umbilical cord blood – with a mother's consent, stem cells are collected from the umbilical cord and placenta using a sterile needle after the safe delivery of her baby.

What are the odds of finding a match?

Any individual can have difficulty finding a matching donor, but Indigenous Canadians, Asians, South Asians, Hispanics, and African Canadians find it especially challenging because 69 per cent of the national registry is Caucasian.

How to get involved

1. Register to become a donor

Not everyone who registers will be matched to a patient and asked to donate but each registrant provides hope for those waiting.

To be eligible, you must be:

- between 17—35 years old
- in good general health
- free of infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS or hepatitis B and C
- have valid provincial healthcare coverage
- provide a tissue typing sample using a buccal (cheek) swab
- willing to help any patient

Registering is easy. Sign up online at the [Canadian Blood Services website](#) and you will receive a cheek swabbing kit in the mail.

2. Spread the word

Encourage your family and friends to join Canada's national stem cell registry. The more registrants we have, the higher the odds of finding matching donors for patients in Canada.

3. Host a recruitment event

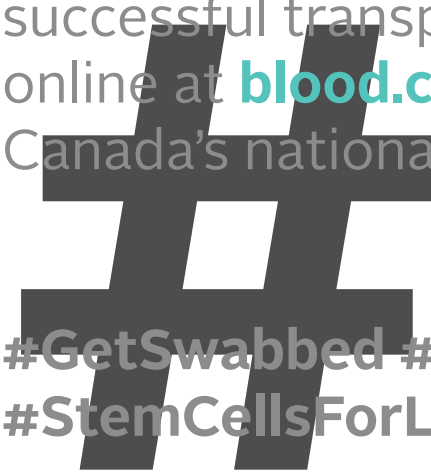
Help bring awareness for stem cell registration by hosting a #GetSwabbed recruitment event in your community. Contact your Canadian Blood Services territory manager to get started and book your swabbing event.

4. Share this toolkit with your friends

Social media assets

Click images to download

Patients are more likely to find a match with a donor who shares their ethnic background and, statistically, young healthy male donors provide the most successful transplant outcomes. Register online at blood.ca/GetSwabbed and join Canada's national stem cell registry.



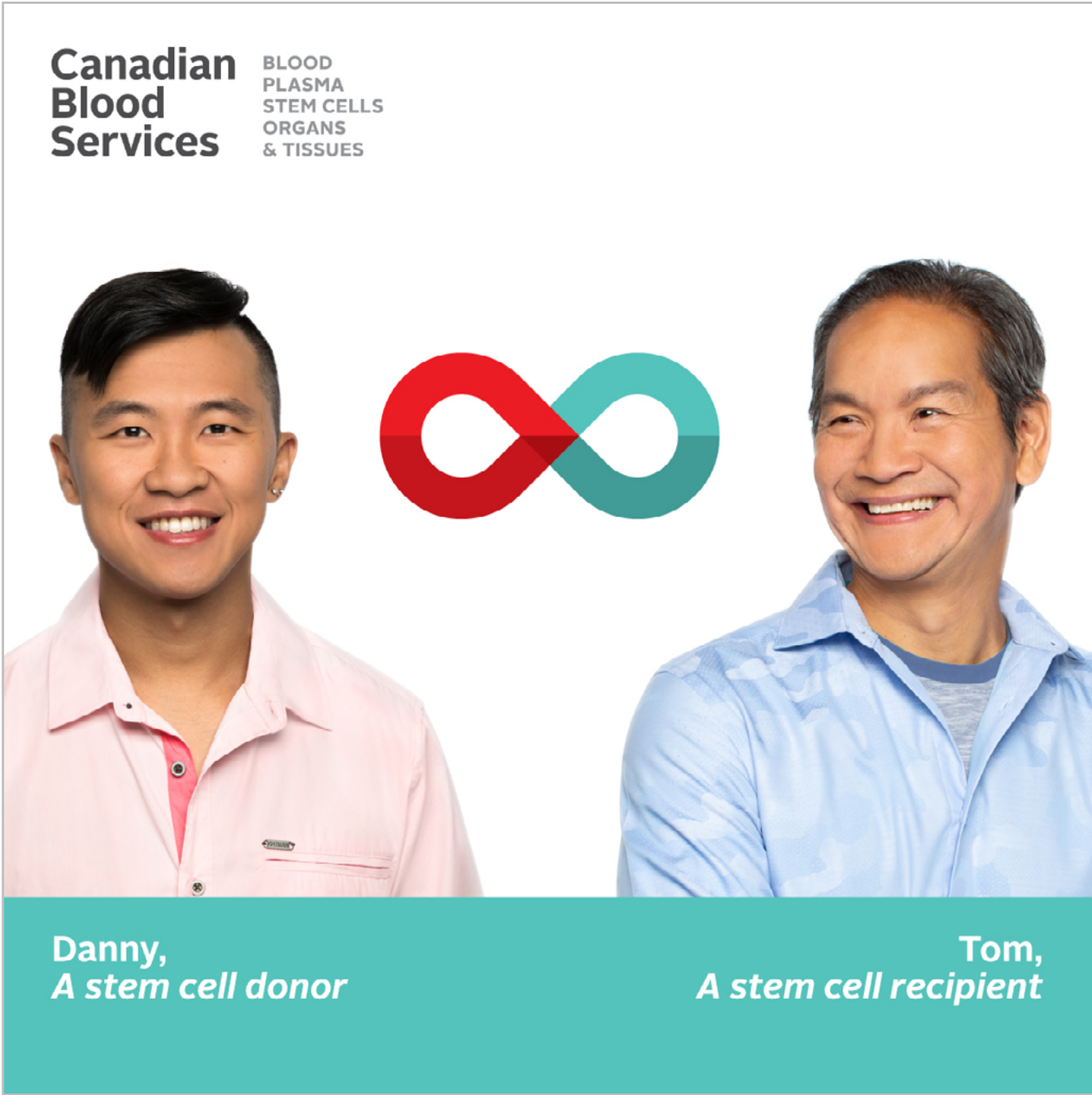
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Facebook



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Social media assets


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75% of patients in Canada battling diseases like leukemia are relying on someone they have never met to save their life. Patients are more likely to find a match with a donor who shares their ethnic background and, statistically, young healthy male donors provide the most successful transplant outcomes. Register online at blood.ca/GetSwabbed and join Canada's national stem cell registry.

#GetSwabbed #JoinTheLifeline
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Facebook



75%


of patients must rely on **unrelated donors** to save their lives



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If you are 17—35 years old, in good health and willing to donate to any patient, register online at blood.ca/GetSwabbed and join Canada’s national stem cell registry.



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#StemCellsForLife #CanadasLifeline



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It may take weeks, months or even years to get the call to be a stem cell donor. Every person who registers to join Canada’s national stem cell registry provides hope for patients in Canada and around the world. Register online at blood.ca/GetSwabbed and spread the word amongst your family and friends.



#GetSwabbed #JoinTheLifeline
#StemCellsForLife #CanadasLifeline



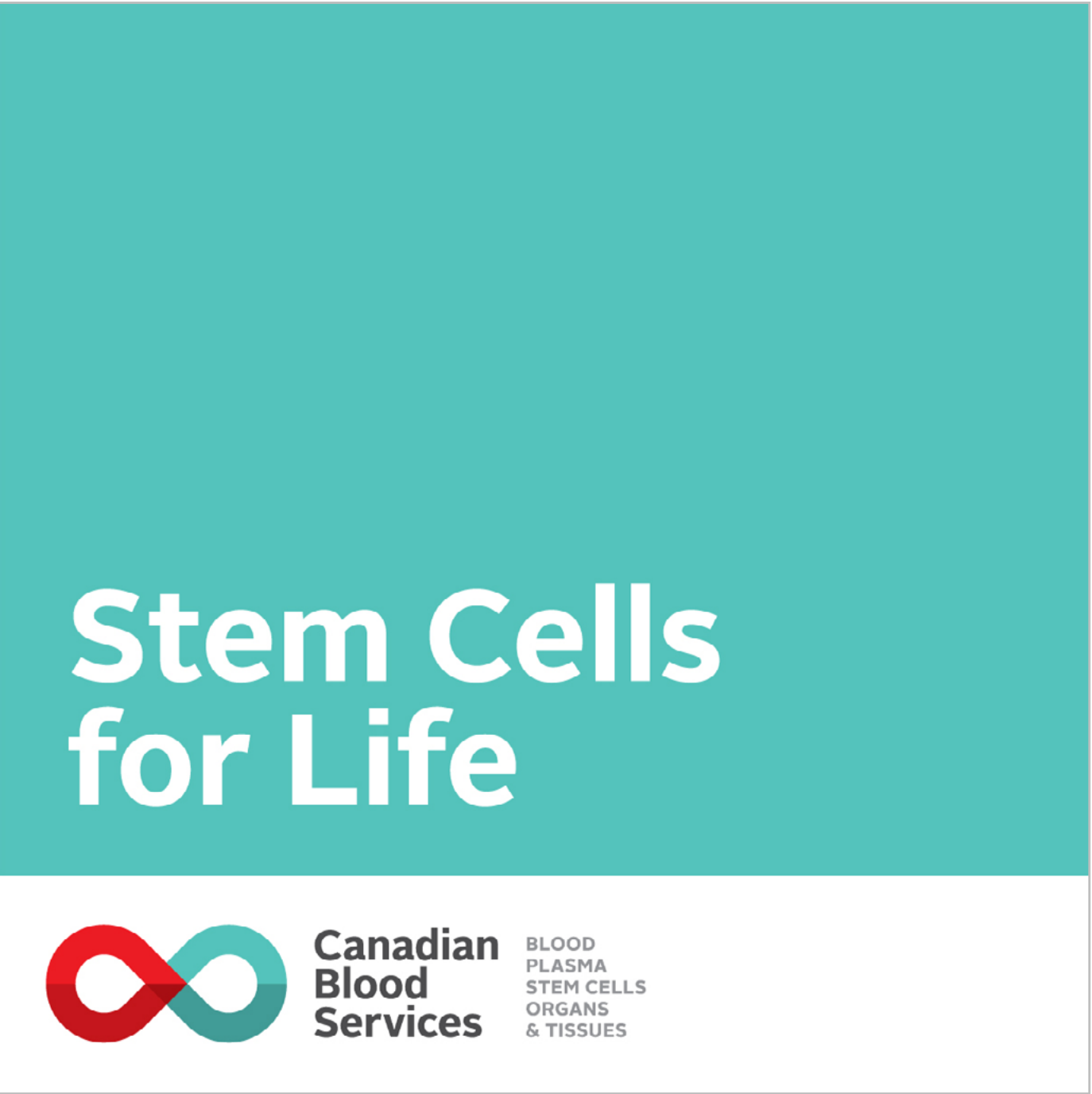
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Shareable videos

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Share these videos and relevant messaging on social media to help us reach our objective, recruiting young healthy male donors aged **17—35** to **#GetSwabbed** and join Canada's national stem cell registry.



Echo

Shareable videos

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Share these videos and relevant messaging on social media to help us reach our objective, recruiting young healthy male donors aged **17—35** to **#GetSwabbed** and join Canada's national stem cell registry.



Daniel

Talking points

Use these talking points to help you during recruitment events, interviews, Q and A's or as radio chat notes.

- Over 80 diseases and disorders – including leukemia, lymphoma and aplastic anemia – can be treated with a stem cell transplant.
- Every year, hundreds of patients in Canada need a stem cell transplant and more than 75 per cent will rely on someone they don't know to save their life.
- Patients are more likely to find a match with a donor who shares their ethnic background. To accurately reflect Canada's patient population, more potential stem cell donors from diverse ethnic backgrounds are needed on the registry.
- Younger stem cell donors provide better patient outcomes and male donated stem cells decrease the possibility of post-transplant complication.
- Registering is easy. Sign up online at the Canadian Blood Services website and you will receive a cheek swabbing kit in mail.
- Every person who registers to join Canada's national stem cell registry is providing hope for patients in Canada and around the world.
- It may take weeks, months or even years to get the call to be a stem cell donor. At any given moment, Canadian Blood Services is searching for viable matches on behalf of hundreds of patients in Canada in need of a stem cell transplant.
- Spread the word. Encourage your family and friends to join Canada's national stem cell registry. The more registrants we have, the higher the odds of finding matching donors for patients in Canada.

About Canadian Blood Services

Canadian Blood Services is a not-for-profit charitable organization dedicated to recruiting and matching healthy, committed volunteer donors for a national registry that accurately represents Canada's ethnic mosaic.

Our staff coordinates searches in Canada, as well as other international registries, towards a single goal - helping patients get the stem cells they need to save their life.

Visit blood.ca to learn more.

