

Jonathan Sanderson



It was a painless procedure and took about three hours just like a long blood donation session.

Jonathan Sanderson has been a blood donor for a long time. A few years ago when he was giving blood, someone asked him if he'd like to go on the bone marrow register.

Four years later he had a phone call saying that he was a potential match for a patient. More blood samples were taken to see if Jonathan was a close match. He was and more tests were carried out. He had a medical, during which he says he was really well looked after. He spoke to a doctor and had a counselling session to make sure that he felt able to go through with the procedure and wouldn't back out after this point. The patient had been receiving huge doses of chemo and would be at a very low ebb. I was fully committed to the procedure, Jonathan says.

In the four years since he signed up the friend of a colleague of Jonathan's had contracted Hodgkin's lymphoma at the aged 27 and died because no match could be found for her. Another colleague had been raising money for bone marrow research.

He was given GCSF injections that increase the amount of bone marrow in the body's system. He had a bit of backache following these, but nothing really.

On the Monday he went to the hospital with his girlfriend and gave his bone marrow donation the following day.

During the procedure he says he felt a bit dizzy but had no other untoward side effects.

The doctor explained to him what procedures the recipient would go through. He told me that without my bone marrow the patient had a zero per cent chance of survival, but with it, the odds increased to between 50 and 60 per cent. I had a moment of clarity at this point realising what a fantastic thing this was to do.

After the transplant, Jonathan started a group on Facebook. It's a lot easier to save a life than you might think to encourage other people to join the register. Some people fear needles, we've had people asking how to join and had lots of support from friends and family.

There will be some people out there who will still be a bit sceptical about it but it may be eight hours of your life when you feel a bit outside your comfort zone, but that's nothing compared to how the recipient and their family is feeling.

<http://www.facebook.com/inbox/?ref=mb#/group.php?gid=34821287819>