

newsworthy trends

Ten Million Marrow Donors Registered Worldwide

(NAPSA)—Each year more than 35,000 children and adults develop life-threatening diseases of the blood or immune system, including leukemia, lymphoma and genetic diseases. For many of these individuals, the best hope for a cure is a marrow or blood-cell transplant from a volunteer donor or donated cord-blood unit.

A marrow or cord-blood transplant requires careful matching of patient and donor-tissue types. Seventy percent of patients don't have a matched family donor. Fortunately, the National Marrow Donor Program® (NMDP) and its funding partner, The Marrow Foundation®, make transplants possible for these patients.

Worldwide, 10 million individuals have registered as volunteer stem-cell donors. This includes participants from 56 donor registries in 41 countries and 38 cord-blood banks in 21 countries.

NMDP plays a key role. Its registry includes more than 5.5 million donors and 45,000 cord-blood units available to serve patients around the world.

Every search conducted through NMDP provides patients with access to the global donor listing—including donors and cord-blood units listed through the NMDP and its International Registry partners, as well as access to the Bone Marrow Donors Worldwide (BMDW) donor listing.



Sarka Balcarova, right, and her life-saving donor, Monica Watson.

That access was a lifesaver recently when two children from the Czech Republic needed transplants.

Sarka Balcarova, born in Feb. 1994, found out she had leukemia when she was 6 years old. She was hospitalized and received nine months of chemotherapy before she was considered well enough to return to school.

Three years later, the leukemia returned and she was readmitted to the hospital. Her doctors began searching for a marrow donor.

A few months later, a donor was found more than 4,600 miles away—Monica Watson, mother of three and a resident of Orlando, Florida.

An international courier delivered the bone marrow and she was transfused. Within a few

months, Sarka could return home.

Ivo Nesvadba was diagnosed with chronic myeloid leukemia or CML, an uncommon disease in children. Because he was an only child, he had to find a matched, unrelated donor.

The search started in the Czech Republic but found no suitable donors. One was finally found—Sue Kijanski of Cleveland, Ohio. He received his transplant in March 2001. It took a year and a half before he began to feel better again.

By the summer of 2002, he was well enough to attend an international camp for children with hematologic diseases and he is currently studying computer science, which he hopes to pursue as a career.

Sarka and Ivo's stories demonstrate the importance of global partnerships for transplant. As a leader in the field, the NMDP plays a vital role in overcoming barriers to transplants and bringing together the people and resources needed to make life-saving transplants a reality.

For more information on the National Marrow Donor Program, visit www.marrow.org or call 1-800-MARROW2.

For more information on how you or your organization can support The Marrow Foundation, visit www.themarrowfoundation.org or call 1-800-506-5427.