

Mail says...

Rallying cry for readers to donate blood

WE all sweat blood for our jobs no matter what we do but two Mail members of staff have taken it a step further by rolling up their sleeves to donate blood in aid of our Take Five Minutes campaign.

Burton's MP Andrew Griffiths was even persuaded to tackle his aversion to needles to give a pint as we all pull together for such a worthwhile cause. Let's face facts.

Without regular blood transfusions and eventually a bone marrow transplant Katherine Sinfield will die.

She is fighting a losing battle every day of her life now and it is not an exaggeration to say that your decision to donate or not could be the difference between life and death for her.

Giving blood and, in particular needles, send shivers down the spine of most people but it is now time for us all to put fear to one side and step up to the plate.

If readers are fit and able, then there is no excuse for not taking little over an hour to help boost blood banks and sign up to be a bone marrow donor.

Why not give the gym a miss one night, don't go to the pub or pop your favourite television show on record and instead sign up to be a blood donor.

Surely a few minutes of discomfort are worth it if they potentially are able to give someone a lifetime of memories they wouldn't have had if you had decided not to offer up your arm.

We hope by showcasing the Mail team's efforts that it will encourage others to see how easy it is and to follow in their footsteps and help find the bone marrow match that Katherine so desperately needs to survive.

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'Giving blood should

by Rob Smyth
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I CAN honestly say that I have never had a problem with needles but, as I got ready to give blood, people still tried to scare me by exaggerating the size of the one about to be used to take blood from my arm.

However, this did not faze me, and I was buoyed, as I walked into Burton Town Hall, by just how many people would be joining me as I gave up a pint of blood as part of the Mail's Take Five Minutes campaign.

People young and old lined up, all waiting to help out their fellow man by sparing a little time to donate.

All had their reasons. Mine was to try to save the life of Katherine Sinfield, the wife of my



colleague Stephen.

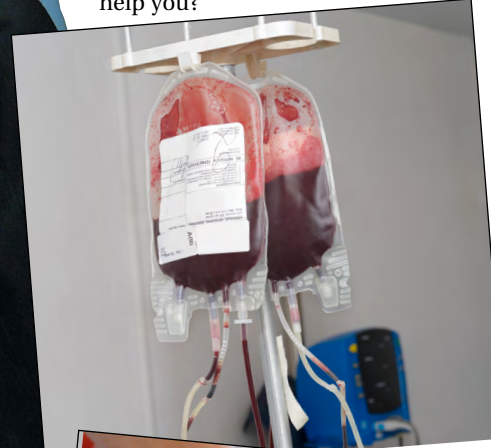
After filling in a couple of forms, 'Rob Smyth' was shouted across the waiting room and it was my turn.

One of the staff from the NHS Blood Donor Service went through a list of questions before taking a pinprick of blood from my finger and saying that I was ready to donate. As I waited, nurses told me I had to drink a pint of water before I started, to reduce the risk of fainting.

After a couple of glasses of water and a few biscuits with my colleague, Mail deputy editor Emma Turton, who also gave blood, and Burton's MP Andrew Griffiths, that was that and we had all donated blood and were on course to be on the bone marrow donor register.

The staff at the donor session were fantastic and help to offer a vital lifesaving service. All I would ask is that anyone who is fit and able to do one thing - give blood and at the same register to be a bone marrow donor.

There is no excuse for not doing it. Just think; if you were ill, wouldn't you want someone to help you?



MP's account of giving blood and why others should follow

BURTON'S MP put his fear of needles behind him to back the Take Five Minutes campaign and give blood.

Andrew Griffiths rolled up his sleeves and donated a pint and used his experience to urge others to do the same.

He told the Mail: "I doubt there are many people who are as frightened of needles as me but I was surprised how painless and easy a process it was to give blood.

"When you have given blood you get a feeling of pride knowing that you have done

something good and helped somebody out with what you have done.

"I was also surprised by the number of people giving blood and would urge anybody and everybody who can sign up, give blood and take a test to see if you could be a bone marrow donor.

"Just think that one day

your loved one could need blood and so there can be no excuses any more.

"Please become a blood donor and you could perhaps help save a life."



be done by everybody'



SMILES ALL ROUND... Mail deputy editor Emma Turton and reporter Rob Smyth with MP Andrew Griffiths after giving blood.



• Katherine's cancer diary

Thursday, July 25 - 'My life on the ward goes on and on'

THE reception class teacher from Burton, who is battling against leukaemia, has described in her own words daily life on the hospital ward she is confined to in her fight against the disease.

Katherine Sinfield, 32, of Balfour Street, needs daily doses of antibiotics, fungal drips and blood transfusions after being diagnosed with chronic myeloid leukaemia in April.

She remains in hospital, in Birmingham, after doctors said her only hope of survival was to receive a bone marrow transplant. Last month, the Mail launched its Take Five

Minutes campaign in a bid to locate a suitable donor, not just for Katherine, but for anyone who is in her position.

Here, Katherine describes life another day on the ward.

"Another day of anxiety as I wait for the results of yesterday's bone marrow biopsy. This anxiety is further com-

pounded today as I wait for news on my dad who is undergoing heart tests at the Queen's Hospital in Burton.

Today was unique in that Stephen was my only visitor and he arrived earlier than normal as he tested the journey on the train to alleviate

Birmingham's many road and tunnel closures. It was nice to spend six or more hours together even if it was just on the ward.

My anxiety soon turned to pain and agony as the skin biopsy site from yesterday fired into life. The pain was horrendous and after paracetamols failed to make any mark whatsoever, I was put on codeine tablets.

My temperature also took on an upward spiral of 38.5 rising to 39 degrees by 10.30pm and 39.4 in the night. My blood pressure and pulse also climbed but these thankfully stabilised."



Factfile



KATHERINE Sinfield, of Balfour Street, has opened up her life to readers as she revealed that she needs a bone marrow transplant to save her life after being diagnosed with leukaemia.

Now, as part of the Mail's campaign, here is a detailed breakdown of how you can get tested and what happens if you found out you were a match.

A bone marrow transplant is the only cure for Katherine and so the search has begun to find her a match.

With the NHS British Bone Marrow Registry, people must be aged between 18 and 49 years old and be a blood donor.

You can join when you next give blood, or at the same time as your first donation.

At the time of your blood donation they will take an extra blood sample, so that they can identify your tissue type for the registry from your DNA - the genetic material our bodies are made up from.

You must inform staff at the blood donation session that you wish to join the marrow register before your blood donation is taken.

More information is available by calling the National Blood Service Donor helpline on 0300 123 2323.

The other method is through the Anthony Nolan Trust which uses its register to match potential bone marrow donors to blood cancer patients in desperate need of a bone marrow transplant.

Anyone aged 16 to 30 can sign up online by visiting www.anthonynolan.org and providing a saliva sample.

WORD ON THE WEB

You have your say on stories published on the Mail's website each day:

STRIKE BATTLE ORDERS

Posted by robcox
The Fire Brigades Union do not want to strike, neither do the firefighters.

This whole situation has been created by a government that is dedicated to creating a 'them and us' situation with a public which is being used as a scapegoat for the financial mess Mr Cameron's rich pals in the city have got us into.

Someone with two weeks' 'training' is no better than someone with none at all, or, as I stated in my previous comments, is it really that easy to do the job?

If so, why did the fire service (and therefore the taxpayer) bother training me for an 18-week residential course, followed by two years 'on probation', with a final examination as a 'qualified firefighter' after five years?

Only then was I considered 'fully trained'. If the Derbyshire Chief Fire Officer is so confident this barmy knee-jerk reaction is a good idea, lets hear from him!

MP HOLDS CRISIS TALKS WITH HOSPITAL TRUST CHAIRMAN

Posted by Terry
The top staff knew what was coming but preferred to hide.

It is their fault. This has been brewing for years and they did nothing. Accident and emergency has got worse despite promises of improvements.

GREEN LIGHT FOR 1,700 HOMES - DESPITE GRAVE MISGIVINGS FROM COUNCILLORS

Posted by Goodtalk

These developments will all be getting built at the time of the elections in 2015 and every politician who has played a part in this mess should expect to pay the price - people are not going to forget or forgive.



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