

I have been married to my husband for 25 years. I am 48 y.o.
I am a dentist and graduated from Columbia University Dental School in 1995.
My husband is an Orthopaedic Spine Surgeon.
We have a daughter Emily age 18. We were never able to have more kids so we adopted two younger children (ages 13&12) while we were living in Hawaii.

I was originally diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML) in Jan. 2104 and underwent intensive chemotherapy. At that time we ran Bone Marrow matches on all my siblings (5total) and to our sadness there was no match. The doctors searched the national banks and even extended their search to international banks. But there were no viable matches for me. So their recommendation and my choice at that time was to complete the full chemotherapy treatment only and hope that would cure me. But unfortunately, as is usually the case of AML, I relapsed, just this past month after almost 2 years in remission.

I am currently at the University of Pennsylvania Hospital undergoing an intensive round of chemotherapy to get me back into remission so that I would be able to get a stem cell transplant. Even after a whole year of collecting data for potential donors, there is still not one out there with my Stem Cell match. The only option I have now is to get an umbilical cord stem cell transplant that is far more risky and dangerous, but I have no choice. The cord transplants they have saved for me is not even perfect matches but we have no choice at this point.

My plea to your readers is that because there are so few Koreans represented in the donor pool, that they mobilize and please sign up to see if they could be a potential donor. And even more important for all Korean families having babies, if they could PLEASE donate their umbilical cord stem cells (there is no harm to baby or mother because it comes from the placenta that gets discarded)...it could save a life. It may be too late for me, but my plea is for future patients like myself who may not have the chance.

Sincerely,
Youngson Song Orchowski

