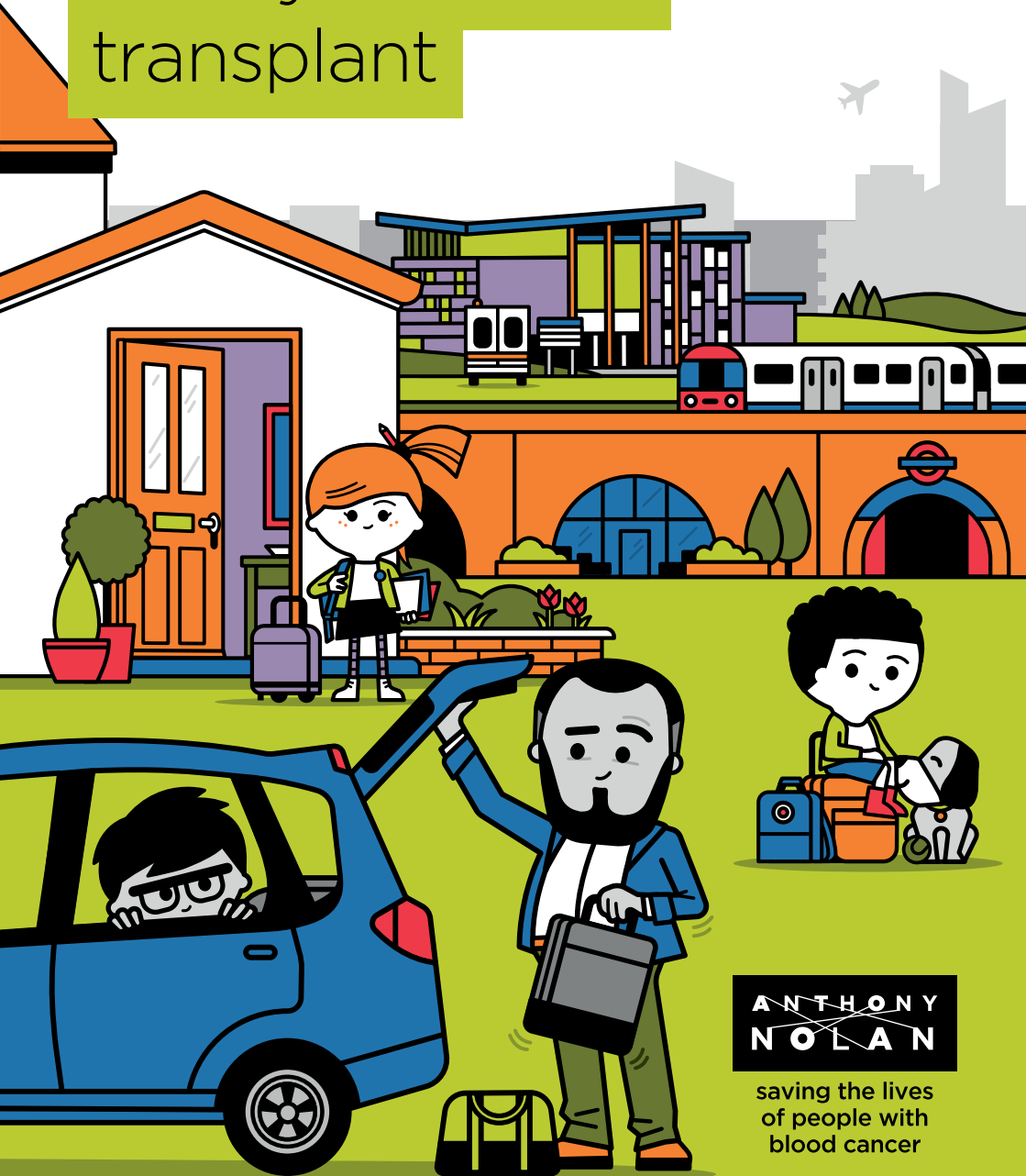


Going to hospital for my stem cell transplant



**ANTHONY
NOLAN**

saving the lives of
people with
blood cancer



Patient Information Forum

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patientinfo@anthodynolan.org

The information contained in this booklet is correct at the time of going to print (April 2024). We plan to review this publication within three years. For updates or the latest information, visit **anthodynolan.org**

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ANTHONY NOLAN
PATIENT SERVICES

What's in these activity booklets?

We've produced this series of activity booklets for children aged between 5 and 11 who are about to have a stem cell transplant (sometimes also called a bone marrow transplant). It will help them understand why they need a transplant, what will happen to them and how to look after themselves as they recover. The accompanying parents' guide — Helping your child through their stem cell transplant — covers the same subjects in more detail so you can answer any questions they might have.

It's been written with guidance and advice from parents who have been where you are now, as well as specialist healthcare and teaching professionals, to help you manage your current situation. Each transplant centre will do things differently, so the information in this booklet is a general guide and isn't intended to replace advice from your child's doctor and transplant team.

We are here for you and your child on every step of their transplant journey. Our website contains lots of transplant related advice and highlights our other services too. If you need to ask us any questions, or you would like some more advice, please get in touch with the Anthony Nolan Patient Services team at **patientinfo@anthonyolan.org** or on **0303 303 0303**

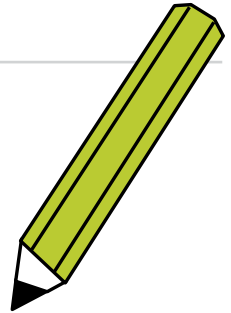
All about you

This is your activity book. You can write and draw things in it.

It will help you understand why you have been feeling poorly and get you ready for your stem cell transplant.

My name is

I am _____ years old



I live in

I am going to be looked after at

Your stem cell transplant

In this booklet we are going to tell you what it's like to have a type of treatment called a **stem cell transplant**. You might have heard the name already, and it's OK if you're not sure what it means.

Have you been feeling poorly recently? You might have had to see your doctor and go to the hospital quite a lot. This was so they could work out why you're unwell and how to make you feel better.



What are you worried about?



Can you remember what the doctors told you about what's happening? Don't worry if not, you can always ask your grown-ups to explain.

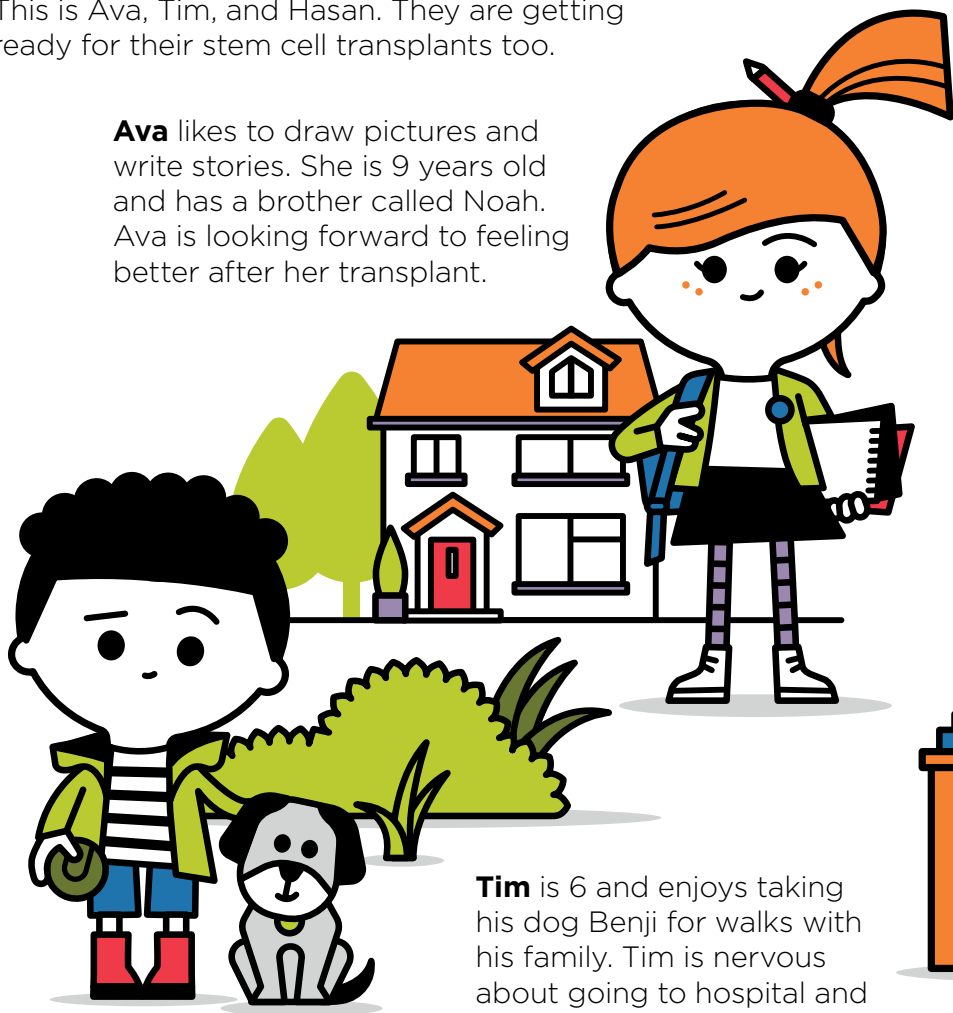
It's OK to feel worried or a bit scared right now. Whatever you're feeling is normal. Just remember everybody is doing everything they can to help you feel better.

It's important to talk to your grown-ups if you're worried about anything. Or you can write down your worries on this page. It's better to get your worries out of your head.

Meet the transplant friends

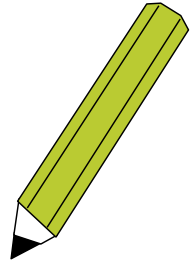
This is Ava, Tim, and Hasan. They are getting ready for their stem cell transplants too.

Ava likes to draw pictures and write stories. She is 9 years old and has a brother called Noah. Ava is looking forward to feeling better after her transplant.



Tim is 6 and enjoys taking his dog Benji for walks with his family. Tim is nervous about going to hospital and is worried about who will look after Benji.

Hasan is 7 and likes playing computer games with his friends. He's not sure what's going to happen but knows the doctors and nurses will look after him.



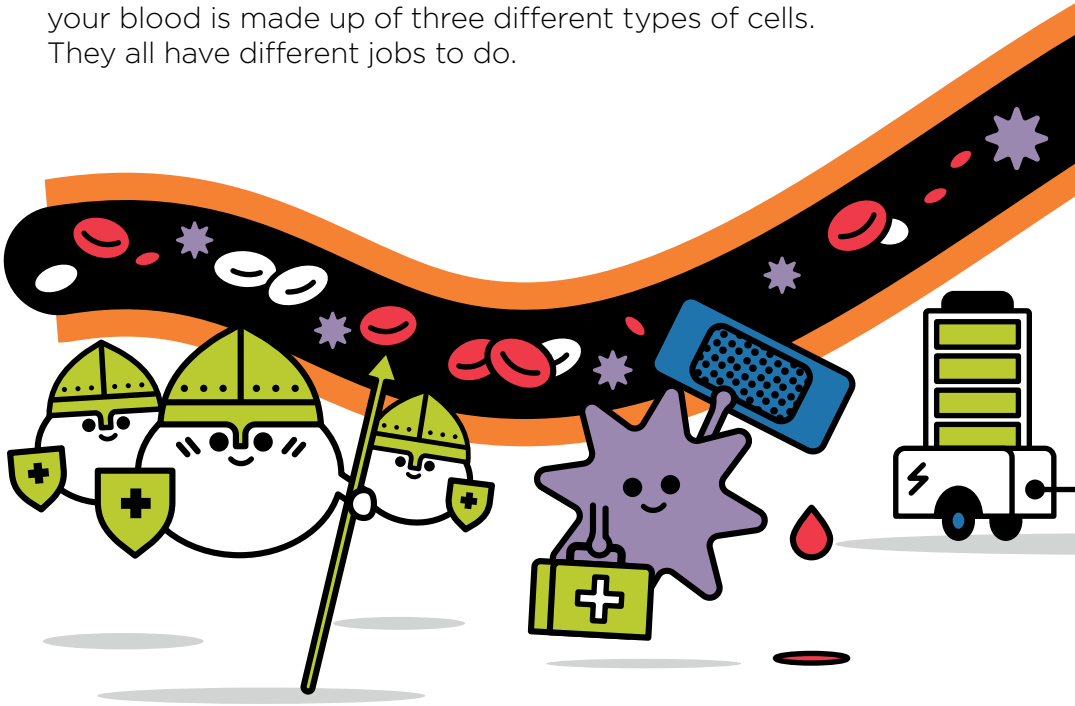
Do you like doing the same things as our transplant friends? What do you like doing?

How do you feel about your transplant?



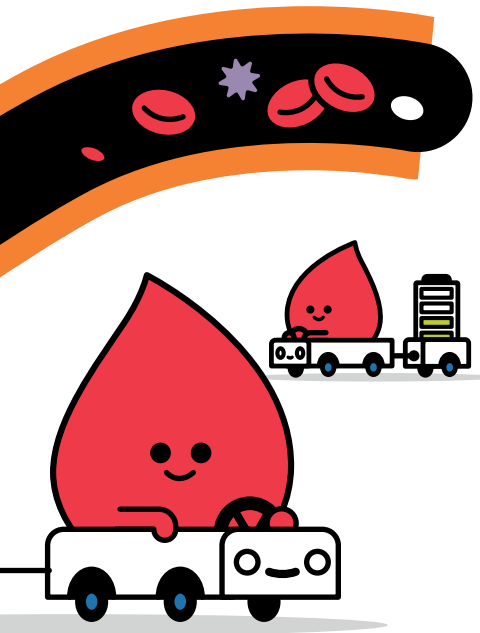
What is a stem cell transplant?

Every part of your body is made of tiny little 'building blocks' called **cells**. Even though you can't see them, your blood is made up of three different types of cells. They all have different jobs to do.



Some of them are fighters and help stop us feeling unwell. They are called **white blood cells**.

Some of them are healers and help stop us bleeding after we cut our skin. They are called **platelets**.



Some of them are transporters and make sure our body has lots of energy. They are called **red blood cells**.

You're feeling poorly now because your blood cells can't do their jobs properly. Which is why you need a **stem cell transplant**.

Stem cells are very special cells that live inside our bones, in the soft area called **bone marrow**. They are a bit like a factory because they make all the cells that go into your blood.

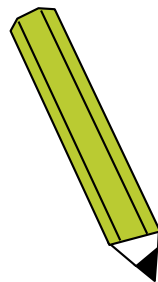
A stem cell transplant is when these special cells are collected from somebody else who isn't poorly and given to you.

You will have your transplant in a hospital and stay there for a few weeks while the doctors and nurses look after you. You will be given treatment to remove your poorly blood cells and the new stem cells will be put into your blood.

After a little while, the new stem cells will start making new blood cells for you. It might be a few weeks before you start to feel a bit better as your body will be working really hard.

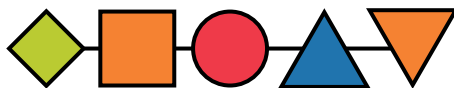
There will be lots of people around to look after you. You won't be alone and can always tell someone how you're feeling.

Finding your match



Everyone's stem cells are slightly different, and we need to find someone with stem cells that are most like yours.

Ava



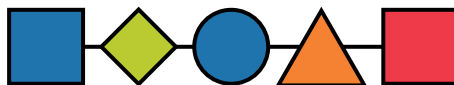
This is why we are looking for a 'match'. The best match could be someone in your family or it might be someone you don't know.

Hasan



To find your best match, a doctor or nurse will take a small amount of blood from your arm using a needle. A special machine will then tell the people at the Anthony Nolan charity what they need to look for to find someone with matching stem cells.

Tim



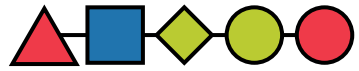
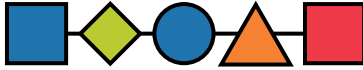
This person is called your **donor** and their stem cells will help you feel better.



Can you help Ava, Tim and Hasan find their matches?

Look at the symbols from their blood cells and match them to their best donor.

Donors



Sometimes looking for a donor can take a little while and sometimes we can't match all the symbols for everyone. If this happens, your doctors will work hard to try and get you a transplant. Your doctors and grown-ups will make the best decisions for you. And remember, you can always ask them questions.

Tests before your transplant

Your doctor will check that your body is ready for the transplant. Some of the checks might seem a little scary at first, but they are nothing to worry about.

It doesn't matter if you don't have all of them. Your doctor will decide which are important for you.

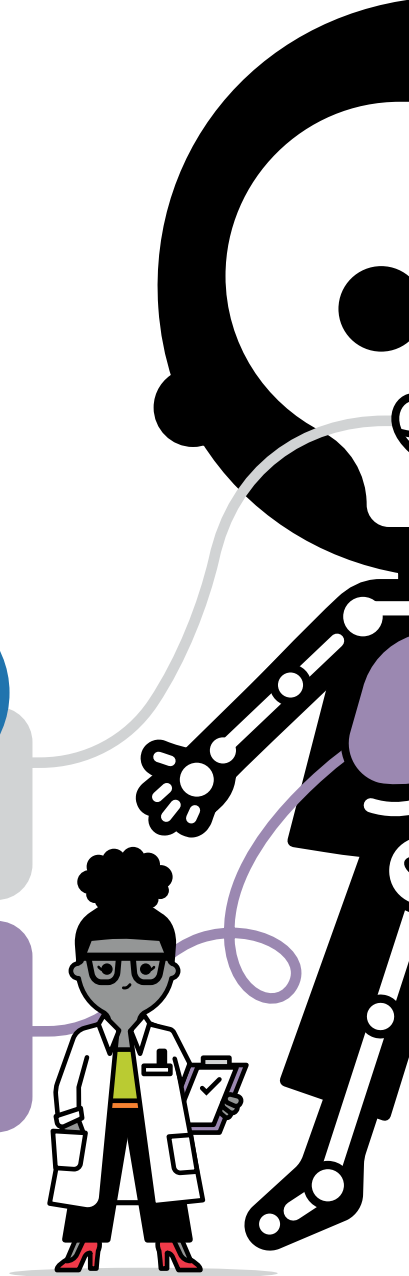
Visit your dentist

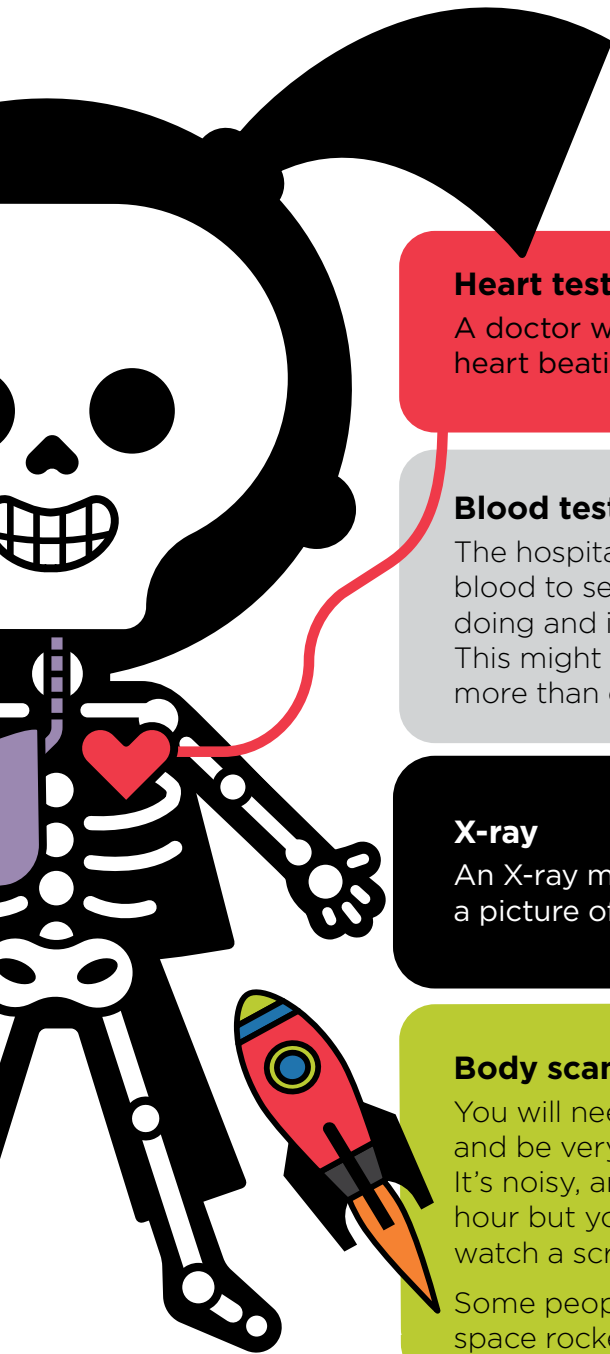
Your dentist will check your teeth and gums are healthy.



Lung test

You will be asked to take some deep breaths to show how healthy your lungs are.





Heart test

A doctor will listen to your heart beating.

Blood tests

The hospital staff will take some blood to see how your blood cells are doing and if your kidneys are healthy. This might happen on more than one day.



X-ray

An X-ray machine will be used to take a picture of your bones.

Body scans

You will need to lie down in a big tube and be very still when the scan happens. It's noisy, and it might take about an hour but you can listen to music or watch a screen to help pass the time.

Some people think it's like sitting in a space rocket!

Your central line

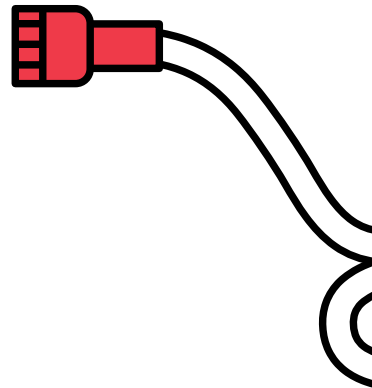
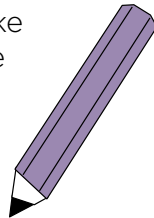
Before and after your transplant you will need lots of different medicines to help look after you. Your doctor will give them to you through a tube called a **central line**. This means they won't have to use a needle every time – which is a lot better!

When you're ready for your central line, you will need to go to hospital to have the tubes put in your chest. The doctors will give you some strong medicine that will put you into a very deep sleep. This means you won't feel anything, and when you wake up you will be able to see your new tubes.

You might need to stay in the hospital overnight just to check everything's OK.

Some people give names to their tube. What would you like to call yours? You could name it after your favourite TV or film character if you like.

My tube's name is





You will need to keep your tube very clean. The hospital will tell you what you can and can't do once you get it. You can write down what they tell you here, so you don't forget.

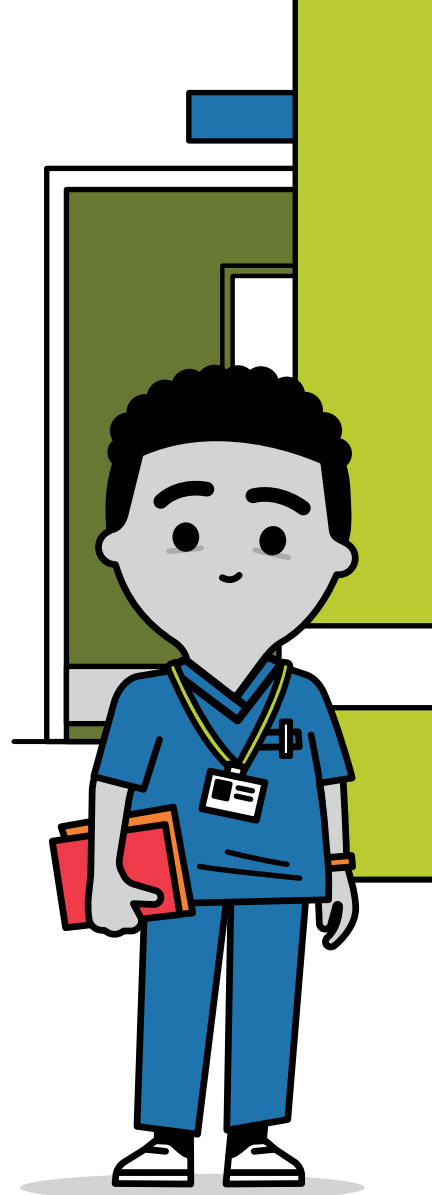
What will the hospital be like?

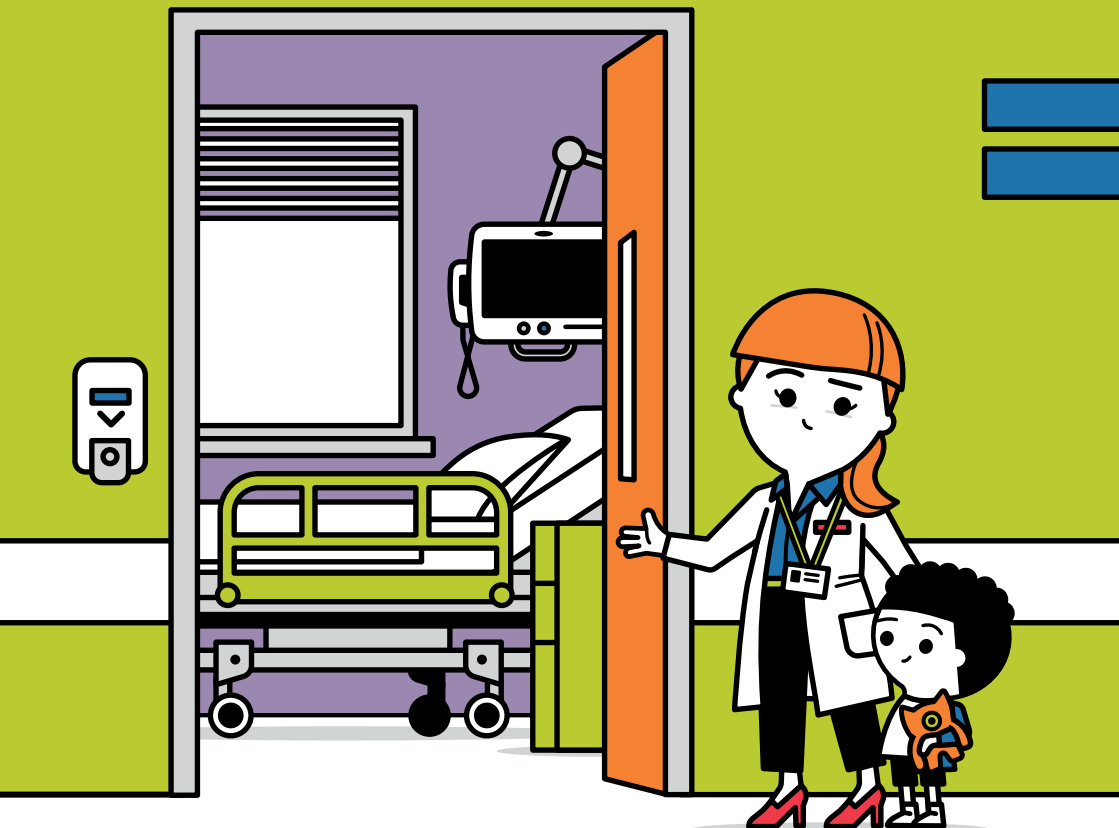
You will be shown around the hospital with your grown-ups before you're due to go in. This will help you get a better idea of what the hospital looks like and what's going to happen.

You will see the main ward where children like you are looked after before their transplant. You will have your own bed and somewhere to put your belongings. There might also be a playroom where you can play with the other children.

When you have your transplant, you will be moved to your own **isolation room** to help stop you getting poorly. Your family will still be able to come in and see you though.

You will learn more about what it's like to be in isolation in our next booklet for you, called *Having my stem cell transplant*.





Our transplant friends are at their hospital already. Hasan and Ava are about to start treatment. They are still on the main ward with other children. Tim has just had his transplant, so he has moved to his own room.

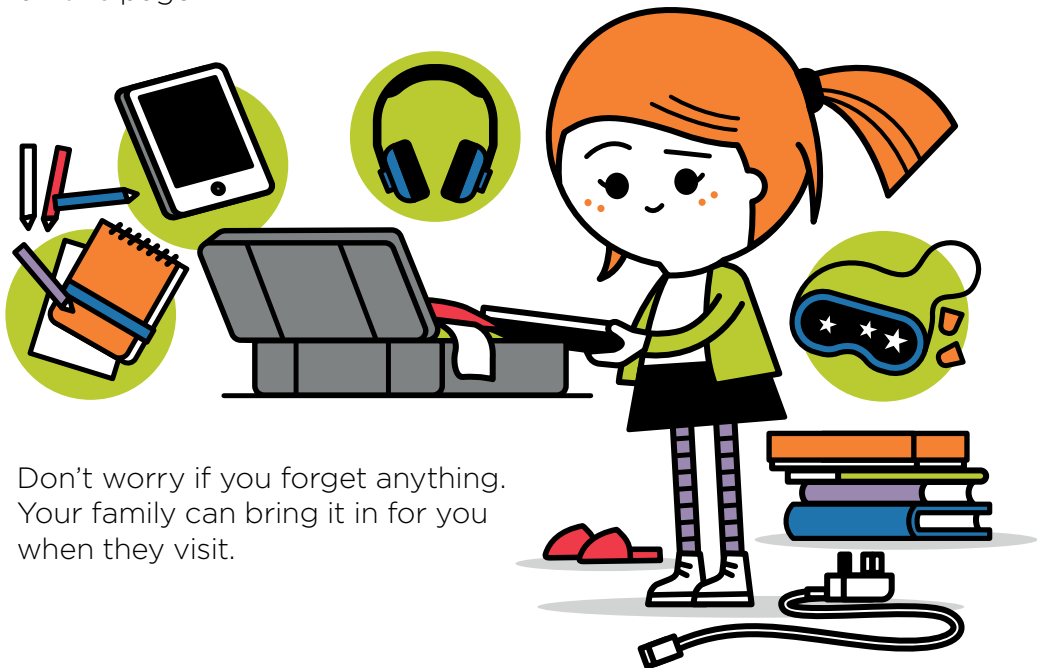
What questions do you have about going into hospital?



Packing your bag

You will need to stay in hospital for a few weeks while you have your transplant. This is so the doctors and nurses can look after you and help you get better afterwards.

Before you go to hospital you will have to pack a bag with all the things you might need. Have a think about what you would like to take with you. You can write a list or draw pictures of the things you need on this page.



Don't worry if you forget anything. Your family can bring it in for you when they visit.

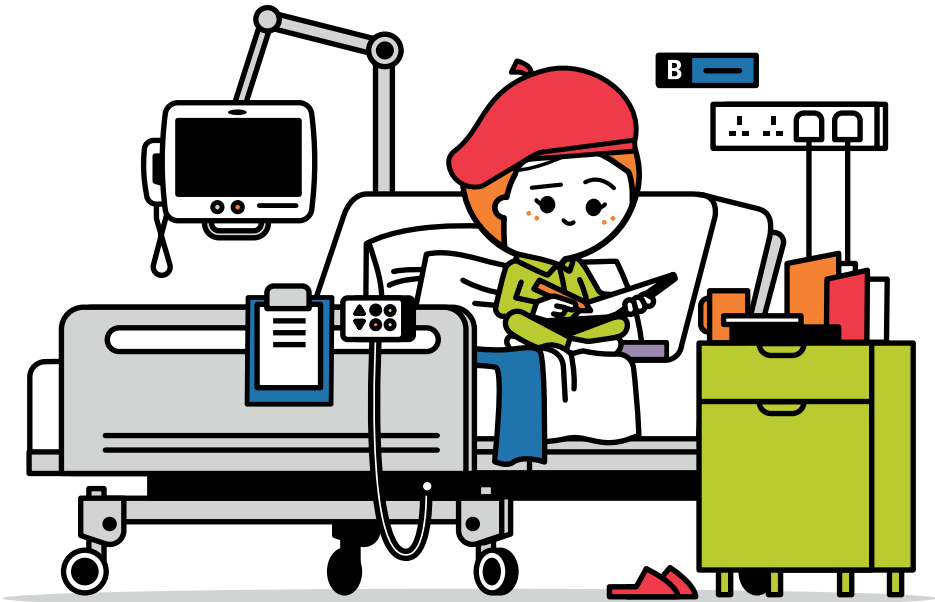
Telling your friends

While you're in hospital, your friends at home and school will be missing you.

They might not know how poorly you have been or understand why you're going to hospital. This could leave them feeling sad and worried.

What would you like to tell your friends about your transplant?

It might help to write them a letter and draw some pictures to tell your story. When you're finished, ask your grown-up to help you send it to your friends at school.



Word Search

Can you find the following words in the grid opposite? They could be spelt horizontally, vertically or diagonally, forwards or even backwards! You can ask your grown-up to help, if you like.

Stem cells – Special cells that make other blood cells

Bone marrow – The inside of your bones, where your stem cells live

Transplant – When your new stem cells are added to your blood

Central line – Two tubes the doctors use to give you medicine

Hospital – The building where you will have your transplant

Donor – The person who is giving you your new stem cells

Medicine – Tablets or injections that help you feel better

Doctor – The person in charge of looking after you

Nurses – The people who look after you every day in the hospital

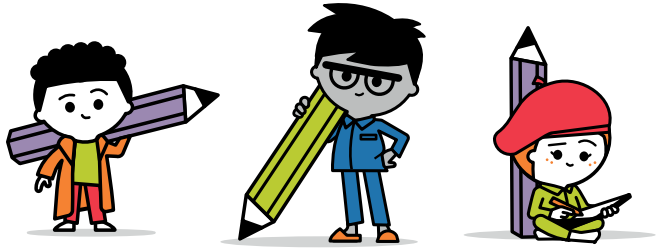
Ward – Where you will stay, with other patients, before your transplant

Isolation room – Where you will stay for a few weeks after your transplant

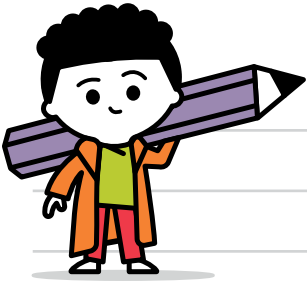
White blood cells – Cells that help stop you getting poorly

Red blood cells – Cells that give you energy

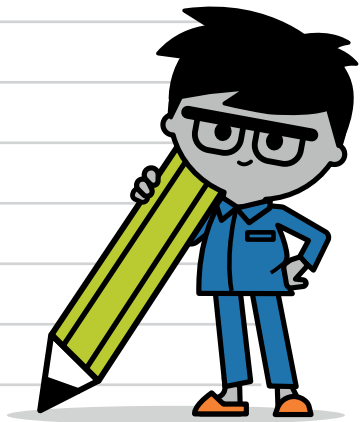
Platelets – Cells that help you heal after injuring yourself



D T S D W W U M A Y A I I J N
 R R T O F H O D E T S S L U J
 A A E C Q I L I F D O I R F E
 W N L T T T T F J L I S D N E
 L S E O P E L H A Y E C I X Z
 A P T R T B N T P S X L I D A
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 S T R R T D C T W A J L N G P
 O L O X L C N H O S P I T A L
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 J S G S L L E C M E T S U C S
 W F C H T S B J D J D P D N G



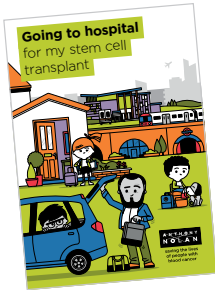
A series of horizontal grey lines for writing, spanning the width of the page. There are 20 lines in total, evenly spaced.



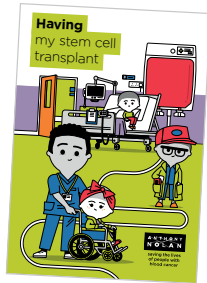


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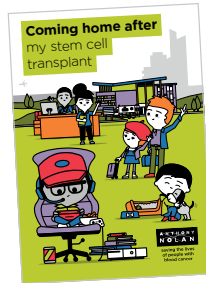
It will help them understand why they need a transplant, what will happen to them and how to look after themselves as they recover.



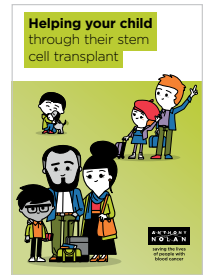
Going to hospital
for my stem
cell transplant



Having
my stem cell
transplant



Coming home
after my stem
cell transplant



Helping your child
through their stem
cell transplant



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