

# Paying for bone marrow

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Module Paying for Bone Marrow INTRODUCTION The harvesting of the bone marrow from healthy individuals to give to patients who need it is something that is considered as being safe by medical authorities. There are more people who require bone marrow than are ready to donate it, though. This reality means that there is some level of pressure for ways to be found to make it easier for bone marrow to be harvested so as to benefit the people whose lives are in jeopardy because they do not have healthy bone marrow. Moreover, the buying and selling of bone marrow is illegal in many nations. In the United States, not only is it illegal, it is an action that carries a big penalty. This is mainly due to ethical reasons as ratifying it would cause many unscrupulous individuals to take advantage of this by finding ways of illegally harvesting organs from perfectly healthy people.

#### The Pros and Cons of Paying for Bone Marrow

The present reality is that there are many patients who could benefit from bone marrow transplants and who may end up dying of their ailments before they can find suitable donors. Most of these individuals are from ethnic minorities. There are some in the medical community who feel that making it possible for people to benefit financially from donating their bone marrow will make more citizens consider the possibility of becoming donors. This would also increase the possibilities of patients being matched with tested donors and create a situation in which the donor and recipient benefit from the operation. This disables the black market which trades on body organs and basically supports a situation in which the poor are pressured to donate their organs. Moreover, this could create a situation where fewer people consider the possibility of contributing their bone marrow as a selfless act because they will feel that it has been commercialised and so is more

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available to patients from all social classes.

Making it possible for people to pay for bone marrow would also transform human beings into commodities that can be used for business practices. Even though it would create a situation in which the bone marrow trading operations of the black market cease to exist, it would also cause there to be more pressure on poor people to combat their present situations by selling their bone marrow. According to Tilney, it could also cause a situation in which human beings are bred for the specific purpose of using their organs for trade (Tilney, 47). It has been argued that there are many nations in which poor people are paid for donating their blood on a regular basis; and that selling the bone marrow would merely be a similar thing.

#### Justification

Essentially, the bone marrow is a renewable body element as is the blood or plasma. This means that even though its transplant from the donor to the recipient is considered to be a serious operation, it is not as life threatening as other operations such as kidney or lung transplants. Even if the donors were poor people who were being reckless with their lives in donating their bone marrow, medical practitioners who were dealing with this issue would be in a position to discourage undue recklessness. The reality is that there are patients who seriously require bone marrow transplants and can be helped by the contributions of donors. It would be more helpful if governments around the world would allow for donors to be compensated in some way so that they would readily donate their bone marrow for testing in order to benefit such victims.

#### Work Cited

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Tilney, Nicholas. *Transplant: From Myth to Reality*. New York: Yale University Press, 2003. Print.