

## Can a Golf Ball Beat Cancer?

### Critical Shortage of Minority Donors

For Immediate Release:

11/24/2009– Basketball Great Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's announcement that he's battling leukemia or cancer of the blood easily makes him the biggest face the disease has ever seen. However, there are other faces, some recognizable too, that have seen the disease on the front lines with as much, if not more, human interest. Kevin Walsh is one of them. As a young television news anchor and reporter in Honolulu, Hawaii, Kevin Walsh met a man who found a most unusual golf ball. Chris Pablo went to the driving range to hit some balls. Halfway through his basket he saw an older, discolored ball. He plucked it out, turned it on its side and saw the words "beat leukemia" looking back at him. Just three weeks prior, Chris had been diagnosed with leukemia.

*The Marrow in Me*, documents multiple accounts of bone marrow donation between strangers. Author Kevin Walsh's credibility stems from the fact that he has been a bone marrow donor himself, and he can talk about bone marrow donation from a donor's unique perspective rather than from a medical one.

Bone marrow matching falls almost exclusively along racial and ethnic lines. There is a critical shortage of minorities on donor rolls. Therefore, sometimes it takes a near miracle -- a match outside of race -- for a bone marrow transplant to occur. Walsh's autobiographical account of a television reporter who covered such a case and actually became a bone marrow donor himself is inspiring and replete with strange coincidences.

*The Marrow in Me* is a detailed narrative about the science behind one of the most interesting, but often misunderstood, medical procedures today. Every ten minutes, someone will die from a blood-related cancer. At any given time in America, there are ten thousand people who could benefit from a bone marrow transplant. Most of them have a blood-related cancer, but there is no shortage of other illnesses that extend the need for potential donors and awareness about bone marrow donation.

*The Marrow in Me* has been released in time for National Bone Marrow Donor Awareness Month. A portion of the proceeds will benefit Alex's Lemonade Stand, The Hawaii Bone Marrow Donor Registry, a major cancer institute in the Boston area and The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

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## About Kevin Walsh



**Kevin Walsh** is a seasoned broadcaster currently working at Comcast SportsNet New England as a sports anchor and reporter. He can also be seen on New England Cable News. Before arriving in the Boston area, Kevin lived and worked in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Fresno, California; Honolulu, Hawaii; and the U.S. Territory of Guam. Kevin is also the author of *The Marrow in Me*, a memoir detailing the fascinating and often treacherous ranks of television broadcasting. *The Marrow in Me* describes how, unexpectedly, he became a part of a storyline as the only match in the world for a 16-year-old leukemia patient he never met. Kevin is also a talented public speaker who often leaves an audience in tears and with the goose bumps, but at the same time inspired to give a part of themselves to something greater than any individual--mankind.

### *Suggested Questions*

1. Does bone marrow donation hurt?
2. What are the risks involved of being a donor?
3. Who can register as a bone marrow donor?
4. How do I register?
5. What is the likelihood that I would match and go to transplant?
6. Why are minorities underrepresented on bone marrow donor rolls?
7. Am I paid for donating my bone marrow?
8. Do I have to pay to register?
9. Can I meet my recipient?
10. Is there another way to collect bone marrow/stem cells without surgery?

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