
Shanghai stem cell donor saves South Korean's life

BEIJING, Feb. 23 -- Cui Jianming didn't tell his parents about his plan to donate stem cells to an unknown South Korean leukemia patient until shortly before he signed the agreement.

"I can imagine how the patient feels," said Cui, a community worker, whose father is suffering from deadly cancer.

"If someone could save my dad, or prolong his life even for a short time, I would be grateful all the same."

The 28-year-old donated 200 ml of stem cells on Friday at Shanghai Huashan Hospital, and the samples were handed over to the representatives of the Korean Bone Marrow Transplant Center to treat Lim Sun-young in Seoul. The samples were on board a flight to Seoul on the same day.

Accompanying the samples was a card signed by Cui to the South Korean patient, wishing him a speedy recovery.

Last August, Cui, who had signed up to be a stem cell donor, was informed by the Shanghai Red Cross that his stem cell sample matched Lim's. Asked if he was willing to help, he said yes immediately, he told China Daily.

"Only when I signed the donation agreement did I know it was the first time a Shanghai resident's stem cell samples were to be sent abroad," Cui said.

"It is not important whether this is the first time or not. What does matter is that a person's life can be saved," he added.

It was not the first time that Cui had volunteered to help.

Five years ago, he took part in a public welfare activity held by the local community and donated blood.

"For me it's just blood donation, but it can save someone's life," he added.

Xie Lijuan, director of the Shanghai Red Cross, said she hopes more people will follow Cui's example, donating stem cells to help save people's lives.

A total of 78,000 people have now signed up as volunteer donors at the local stem cell bank, with 117 of them having donated, according to Shanghai Red Cross.

(Source: China Daily)