

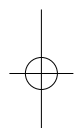
what to do next?

If you would like to know more about sickle cell disorders, the work of the Sickle Cell Society, or how to make a donation please contact:

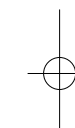
Sickle Cell Society
54 Station Road
London
NW10 4UA

T: 020 8961 7795
F: 020 8961 8346

E: info@sicklecellsociety.org
www.sicklecellsociety.org



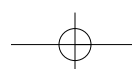
Sickle Cell Disorder
& Sickle Cell Trait

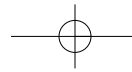


*Information, Counselling
and Caring for those with
Sickle Cell Disorders
and their families*

*Charity Reg: 104 6631
Company Reg: 284 0865
www.sicklecellsociety.org*

www.sicklecellsociety.org





did you know?

- 1 SCD is inherited from both parents.
- 2 It mostly, but not exclusively affects people from Africa and the caribbean.
- 3 240,000 males and females have SC Trait.
- 4 Approximately 13,000 males and females have a SCD.
- 5 Over 300 babies with SCD are born every year.
- 6 A simple blood test will tell whether you have sickle cell trait or the disorder.
- 7 Local Sickle Cell Centres provide professional advice and tests.
- 8 The Sickle Cell Society provides information and some financial support.
- 9 Volunteers are urgently required.
- 10 Donations are gratefully accepted.

sickle cell disorder

Sickle cell is a disorder of the haemoglobin in the red blood cells. Haemoglobin is the substance in red blood cells that is responsible for the colour of the cell and for carrying oxygen around the body.

People with sickle cell disorder are born with the condition. It is not contagious. It can only be inherited from both parents.

The main symptoms of sickle cell disorder are anaemia and severe pain. The pain occurs when the cells can change shape after oxygen has been released. The red blood cells then stick together causing blockages in the small blood vessels.

These painful episodes are referred to as sickle cell crisis. They can last a few hours, a couple of days or up to a couple of weeks.

Sickle cell sufferers are often admitted to hospital when they have a crisis. They are given strong painkillers such as pethadine and morphine to control the pain.

Over time sickle cell sufferers can experience damage to organs such as the liver, kidney, lungs, heart and spleen. Death can also result from complications of the disorder.

There is not a universal cure available for sickle cell sufferers. Current research into cures for the disorder have resulted in the use of bone marrow transplant as a possible cure for a limited number of affected individuals. Further treatment, called Hydroxyurea, which significantly reduces the number of painful crises, is currently undergoing trials in the UK.

sickle cell trait

You are born with sickle cell trait. It is inherited from only one of your parents, and will never develop into sickle cell disorder. There is no cure sickle cell trait at the moment.

You do not have side effects from sickle cell trait; therefore it is a good idea to have a blood test to see if you are a carrier of sickle cell trait.

If you have the trait, the red cells in the blood are normal round shaped cells. Sickle shaped cells are only present in a person with sickle cell anaemia.

Sickle Cell Trait is found in 1 in 10 Africans and Afro-Caribbeans, and is also found in people who originate from the Mediterranean, Asia and the Middle East.

Most people who have the sickle cell trait are healthy. However, anaesthetics can cause problems. Always notify your dentist or doctor before treatment commences to be on the safe side.

The trait is not an illness, but if you are planning to have children, then certain factors have to be considered.

If your partner does not have sickle cell, then you cannot have a child with sickle cell anaemia, but you may have a child with the trait (50% chance).

If you and your partner both have the trait, the chance is one in four that any child conceived may have sickle cell anaemia (50% chance of trait).

