Giving the gift of life

MSU student Chris Reinemann donates bone marrow
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Chris Reinemann said donating bone marrow last September was fairly easy.
"Have you ever fallen while you were ice skating? It felt kind of like that," said Reinemann, only a little more intense, he added. "Walking was kind of hard... the hardest part (of the recovery) is getting in and out of cars."

Reinemann was sitting at a booth Tuesday at the annual Delete Blood Cancer Swab-a-thon put on by a Minot State University cancer biology class. The class members were trying to recruit bone marrow donors for the national bone marrow registry.

Reinemann, a senior graphic design major at Minot State University from Northbrook, Illinois, signed up at last year's bone marrow drive as a potential donor. The class conducts the drive for the organization Delete Blood Cancer. At last year's event, Reinemann's cheek was swabbed for one minute and his sample was sent to the bone marrow registry. Earlier this year, his profile came up on the bone marrow registry as a potential match to a person in need of a transplant. After further testing, Reinemann was indicated as the best possible match. Reinemann said he first had to undergo a physical and a medical screening that determined whether he was healthy enough to donate and also had to have further blood testing during the process. Alysia Huck, director of public information at MSU, said there is roughly a 1 in 500 chance that a person who volunteers at a bone marrow drive will actually be called to donate.

The organization Delete Blood Cancer worked with another organization called Be the Match, said Reinemann. He said the cost of his flight and other expenses in Illinois, where the surgery was done, were all covered. At the Illinois hospital, he was placed under anesthesia for the bone marrow harvest, which involved sucking out...
bone marrow from four small incisions in his pelvic region. He was at
the hospital for about 13 hours and was given medication afterwards
to help him with any pain or dizziness. Doctors warned him that it
would take up to three weeks for him to recover, but it actually took
about a week, said Reinemann.

Reinemann said it was all worth it. "If somebody needs help, it's the
right thing to do," said Reinemann. If he ever needs help, Reinemann
said he expects someone will be there to help him, too.

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