FACTS

SICKLE CELL AWARENESS MONTH

September 2024

Sickle cell disorder (SCD) is the most common genetic blood condition in the UK, affecting approximately 17,500 people.

Did You Know?

- SCD is inherited from both parents; sickle cell trait is inherited from one parent
- SCD can affect anyone of any background or skin colour, although in the UK it predominantly affects people from African and Caribbean backgrounds
- Approximately 1 in 76 babies born in the UK carry sickle cell trait

- Almost 300 babies are born in the UK with full sickle cell disorder each year
- A simple blood test will tell whether you have sickle cell trait or the full disorder
- Children aged 2-16 with SCD are at increased risk for stroke
- The main symptoms of sickle cell disorder are chronic anaemia and episodes of severe pain. The sickle shaped red blood cells stick together, causing blockages in the small blood vessels, causing the pain
- Episodes of pain are generally referred to as a crisis, and require strong painkillers and often a hospital stay

SICKLE CELL SOCIETY

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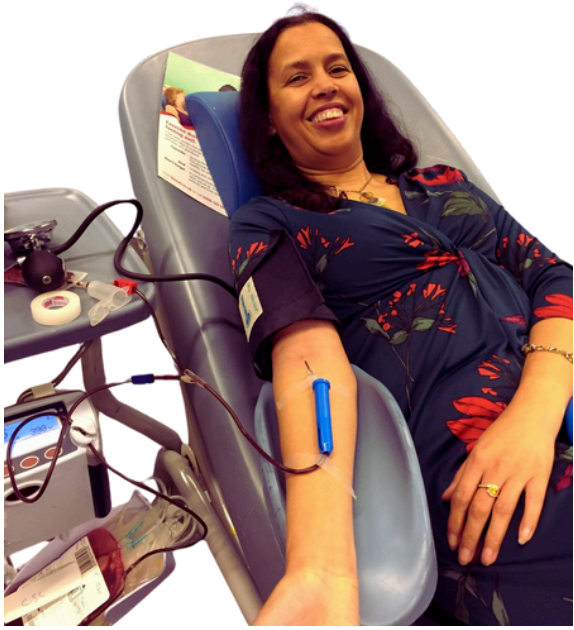
- Cold, damp weather conditions can exacerbate SCD , so people may avoid certain activities, or going outside on certain days, to reduce the chances of a crisis. They may experience chronic tiredness as a result of the anaemia
- People with sickle cell are at risk of complications such as stroke, acute chest syndrome, blindness, bone damage and priapism (a medical emergency from a persistent, painful erection of the penis)



TAKE ACTION

- **Give Blood**
- **Donate**
- **Fundraise**
- **Sign up to medical trials**
- **Volunteer**
- **Call our advice line**
- **Get tested**
- **Find out about youth mentoring**
- **Follow us**
- **Join Us**
- **Attend our events**

- People with SCD can experience damage to organs such as the liver, kidney, lungs, heart and spleen. Death can also result from complications of the disorder.
- People living with the condition require specialist healthcare. Blood transfusions are often required.
- The only possible cure is a bone marrow transplant but this is only possible for a limited number of affected individuals who have a suitable donor. People carrying the trait have protection against malaria infection. However, people with the full blown SCD are more at risk when exposed to malaria.

Find out more and get involved on our website www.sicklecellsociety.org

Scan here to donate

SICKLE CELL SOCIETY

#sicklecellawarenessmonth

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Charity no. 1046631

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