

THE WINDSOR STAR

Friends plea for bone marrow donors for 23-year-old

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Friends of recording studio owner Kevin Couvillon have put out a plea to find a bone marrow donor to save the Windsor man's life.

Couvillon, 23, was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia in July and last month learned that no perfect matches were found out of the 11 million donors in the worldwide bone marrow registry.



Since his diagnosis, Couvillon has undergone four rounds of chemotherapy, and his cancer is in remission. But Couvillon said doctors have told him that his genes indicate it's almost guaranteed the remission won't last.

"Pretty much, they said I'm programmed to have it," said Couvillon, who owns and operates a home recording studio called Blackbox Sound.

"I may be able to hold the remission for a few months, or maybe even a year. But it will come back... It's not the kind of bet you'd want to take."

Asked how he is coping, Couvillon said: "It's life. I don't know. Things happen for a reason. So I just go with it. I've got a lot of good people around me, and I just don't think about it that much, you know?"

Couvillon said he will require monthly chemotherapy to try to suppress the cancer as much as possible. His next treatment will likely happen in a week or so.

Although he's not looking forward to the side effects -- which include nausea, weight loss and hair loss -- Couvillon isn't about to despair.

"I will get through this," he said.

If a bone marrow transplant is impossible in Canada, Couvillon said he has the option of getting it done in the U.S., where a perfect match isn't required.

"It's safer to do perfect matches, because it has the best chance of actually taking," Couvillon said. "But in the States, they have done imperfect matches, with good success over there."

Nick Shields, a co-owner of Seude Productions put out the call to prospective donors by e-mailing everyone who has had contact with his company, asking them to get tested.

"Suede has a policy of not sending out mass e-mails, but this is very important to all of us here," said Shields.

"He is a super young man with a bright future ahead of him."

Despite a lack of a bone marrow donor, Couvillon has other things on his mind.

"We're doing pre-production with (Windsor rock band) StereoGoesStellar right now on a full-length album," said Couvillon.. "And also, I've just started talking with a band -- we're going to start probably in a week or so -- called Amour Amour. So I'm going to do an album with them, too."

In the meantime, Couvillon continues to pursue his passion for music -- even though his weakened immune system prevents him from attending shows. When StereoGoesStellar performed on Friday in downtown Windsor, low levels of the white blood cell type called neutrophils kept Couvillon at home.

"I'm trying to lay low a little bit now," he said.

Jeremy Coulter, 21-year-old singer and keyboard player for StereoGoesStellar, said Couvillon rarely discusses his medical situation, instead focusing on music projects and keeping a sense of humour about things.

"He's one of the most resourceful, and just one of the better people, that I've ever met," Coulter said.

Coulter said he considers Couvillon "phenomenal" in the studio, particularly when it comes to fostering a friendly and creative environment for musicians. "Recording can be a very uncomfortable process, but he makes it so fun, you just want to work and record again and again."

"I'll tell you, Kevin is a hell of a guy."

For more information about bone marrow donation, visit www.onematch.ca and www.givemarrow.net.