**What is Thalassemia?**

**Mission Thalassemia**

Thalassemia is a severe disorder of the blood. Affected persons can’t form proper *hemoglobin*, a chemical in the red blood cells (RBCs) that is responsible for carrying oxygen through the body.

Most patients are **children** as Thalassemia appears in the first months of life but also because it is a **deadly condition** when remaining untreated, living until adulthood is rather unusual then.

The red blood cells collapse due to the unstable hemoglobin structure, one suffers from ***anemia***, a low number of RBCs. This can only be treated with **blood transfusion** every three weeks.

Unfortunately the transfusion causes another major problem in Thalassemia patients – **iron overload**. It damages vital organs like liver, spleen and heart and can become a serious condition. The iron excess can be removed through giving medicines, so called ***chelation drugs****.*

🡪 **The only chance for Thalassemics to live is receiving regular blood transfusion and chelation drugs.**

**Is there a cure for Thalassemia?**

Yes, **Bone Marrow Transplant** (BMT) provides healthy, new *stem cells* to the Thalassemia patient. RBCs are produced in the bone marrow so the patient can form well working ones after successful transplantation.

Unfortunately ***not many patients are in the condition*** to undergo this exhausting procedure, the risks must be avoided then. In general only children under 10 are considered when they have **a matching sibling as donor!**

**🡪So the *supportive care* of transfusion and chelating is very important.**

**How to help Thalassemics**

* **Donate blood** regularly, only if one receives healthy red blood cells every 3 weeks the fatal causes of Thalassemia can be avoided.
* **Spread the word** – Thalassemia is a genetic disease and given from parents to children. ‘Healthy’ parents are carriers and have the disposition to pass the disorder on. This can be ***screened*** and Thalassemia prevented!

As in India so many people (8-11%) are affected with Thalassemia many come from poor families.

*Nivethan Trust supports 70 families from Madurai financially to ensure the children get the treatment they need.*

**Please help us in providing support for**

* **Chelation drugs** which are very expensive. ***INR 6000*** are needed *per month!*
* **Travel expenses:** It is essential for the child’s well being to receive fresh blood through transfusion. Many families can’t afford the costs of going to a (sometimes quite distant) hospital to receive transfusion.

We assist them and provide funds for travel.

The amount required is ***INR 5000*** per month for the most needy families.

**Nivethan Trust**

Is a local nonprofit NGO from Madurai caring for those who need help in health and education issues. Mission Thalassemia is our main project .

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***Donations for Thalassemia patients please to* Account name:** Nivethan Trust at SBI **Account number:** 30437489626 **IFSC Code:** SBIN0000253 D*onations exempted under 80G of the Income Tax Act,1961*