

For older adults with MDS, transplant preserves quality of life

Blood and marrow transplant improves survival

Blood and marrow transplant (BMT) is the only cure for myelodysplastic syndromes (MDS), a blood cancer. However, BMT can have serious side effects.

A new study shows that despite these side effects, people who got BMT had similar quality of life to people who didn't get BMT. And people who got BMT were more likely to survive 3 years after treatment.

Researchers studied about 400 people aged 50 and older who were treated for MDS during 2014-2018. About half of the people had a matched donor for BMT. The other half of the group got standard-of-care treatments, like medicines and radiation therapy.

All the people took surveys about their quality of life about 5 times during the study. Quality of life measures how people feel about their own health: physical, mental and social.

People's quality of life before BMT was the best predictor of quality of life after BMT. Quality of life in both groups (BMT and no BMT) got lower right after treatment and improved between 6 and 12 months after treatment. "These results should reassure patients and clinicians," wrote the researchers.

Keep in mind

Although the quality of life surveys were available in English and Spanish, most of the patients were white people who were not Hispanic. Future research needs to be more inclusive of all people.

Also, not everyone completed all 5 surveys. So the results might not apply to everyone.

Researchers are studying ways to improve people's quality of life through support groups, exercise, meditation and many other programs. Ask your doctor what is available near you, or check the links below.

Learn more about

- [Clinical trials to improve quality of life](https://www.ctsearchsupport.org) at CTsearchsupport.org
- [Support for patients and caregivers](https://www.bethematch.org) at 888-999-6754 or BeTheMatch.org
- More [study summaries](https://www.cibmtr.org) at CIBMTR.org

This plain-language summary (PLS) was written by Jennifer Motl at Medical College of Wisconsin and reviewed by an author of the full article. © 2023 by CIBMTR, license [CC BY-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/).



Source

Cusatis R, Martens MJ, Nakamura R, et al. [Health-related quality of life in reduced-intensity hematopoietic cell transplantation based on donor availability in patients aged 50-75 with advanced myelodysplastic syndrome: BMT CTN 1102](https://doi.org/10.1002/ajh.26768). American Journal of Hematology. 2023;98(2):229-250. Epub 2022/10/18. PMC9839494. doi: 10.1002/ajh.26768.

About this research summary

The Blood and Marrow Transplant Clinical Trials Network (BMT CTN) is a collaboration of the Center for International Blood and Marrow Transplant Research® (CIBMTR®); The Medical College of Wisconsin; The National Marrow Donor Program® / Be The Match®; and The Emmes Company®.

Clinical Trial IDs

BMT CTN 1102; ClinicalTrials.gov
NCT02016781



BMT CTN Data Coordinating Center

Center for International Blood and Marrow Transplant Research® • Froedtert and the Medical College of Wisconsin • Clinical Cancer Center
9200 W. Wisconsin Avenue • Suite C5500 • Milwaukee, WI 53226 • 414-805-0700 • Fax: 414-805-0714

The Emmes Company® • 401 N. Washington Street • Suite 700 • Rockville, MD 20850 • 301-251-1161 • Fax: 301-251-1355
National Marrow Donor Program®/Be The Match® • 500 N. 5th Street • Minneapolis, MN 55401 • 612-627-5800 • Fax: 763-406-4370