

Blood or marrow transplant helps treat leukemia after age 60

A new study shows that blood or marrow transplant (BMT) may be helpful to people in their 60s and 70s who have leukemia.

Acute myeloid leukemia (AML) is a blood cancer. Even when chemotherapy (chemo) makes AML go away at first (complete remission), it almost always comes back. To keep AML away, doctors give extra treatments, called consolidation, which is either more chemo or BMT.

Allogeneic BMT, with healthy cells donated by someone else, sometimes cures AML. However, BMT can have very serious side effects.

This study is one of only a few to look at people in their 60s and 70s whose AML was in remission. For consolidation therapy, about 430 people had BMT, and about 210 had more chemo.

After 5 years:

- 29% (2 of 6 people) who got BMT were still alive, compared to
- 14% (1 of 6 people) who got more chemo.

However, some people did not do as well with BMT, particularly if they were sicker or had a type of AML that was higher risk. Age was not an obstacle to BMT.

Keep in mind

This study looked at medical records from 2002-2013. People were not randomly assigned to either BMT or more chemo. Other factors that influenced the decision to do either BMT or chemo could have influenced these results. Therefore, these findings might not apply to you.

Ask your doctor

Is BMT an option for me? What are the risks and possible benefits?



People older than 60 lived longer after getting BMT than chemo alone.

Learn more about

- [This research](#)
- [Treatment options for AML, including BMT and clinical trials](#)

About this research summary

This information is provided on behalf of the Consumer Advocacy Committee of the CIBMTR[®] (Center for International Blood and Marrow Transplant Research[®]).

Source

Ustun C, Le-Rademacher J, Wang HL, et al. Allogeneic hematopoietic cell transplantation compared to chemotherapy consolidation in older acute myeloid leukemia (AML) patients 60-75 years in first complete remission (CR1): an alliance (A151509), SWOG, ECOG-ACRIN, and CIBMTR study. *Leukemia*. Epub 2019 May 11. doi: 10.1038/s41375-019-0477-x.

