

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](#) at CTsearchsupport.org
- [Support for patients and caregivers](#) at 888-999-6743 or BeTheMatch.org
- More [study summaries](#) at CIBMTR.org

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](#). American Journal of Hematology. 2023;98(2):229-250. Epub 2022/10/18. PMC9839494. doi: 10.1002/ajh.26768.

Clinical Trial IDs: BMT CTN 1102; ClinicalTrials.gov NCT02016781

Sponsor: Blood and Marrow Transplant Clinical Trials Network (BMT CTN)

401 N. Washington St., Suite 700, Rockville, MD 20850;
bmtctn@emmes.com or (301) 251-1161

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.

Learn more at [BMTCTN.net](https://www.bmtctn.net)

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