



Allogeneic transplants help some people with follicular lymphoma

American and European doctors agree: test for HLA type early

For people whose follicular lymphoma relapses, or comes back after treatment, doctors say one type of blood or marrow transplant (BMT) can help.

Follicular lymphoma is typically a slow-growing blood cancer. A BMT using cells from another person—called allogeneic BMT—can cure relapsed follicular lymphoma.

Researchers in the U.S. and Europe teamed up on the largest ever study of follicular lymphoma. They studied 1,567 people who got allogeneic BMT between 2001 and 2011 to treat relapsed follicular lymphoma. This study was published in the journal, *Cancer*.

Although BMT can have serious side effects, many people who got BMT did well. Five years after BMT, 61% (61 out of 100 people) were alive.

Researchers said that allogeneic BMT was helpful for people who were healthy enough to carry out normal activities and who had not yet had several kinds of chemotherapy, or chemo.

Find your match early

In the study, the BMT patients had well-matched donors. This means patients and donors had the same or very similar human leukocyte antigen (HLA) markers on their cells.

Because it takes time to find a matched donor for BMT, researchers said all patients should get a blood test for HLA type. It's important to test as soon as lymphoma is found. That's even before they know if BMT might be needed.

If you have lymphoma, ask your doctor about testing your HLA type. If you have brothers or sisters, the doctor may test their HLA type too. If you don't have a brother or sister who matches you, your doctor can search for a matched donor through the Be The Match Registry. This is a list of people who have volunteered to donate blood or marrow.

Also, in this study, people who had a reduced-intensity transplant did better. This type of transplant uses lower doses of chemotherapy and radiation to prepare your body to receive the donated cells.

Consider asking your doctor

If you are considering treatment for follicular lymphoma, you may want to ask:

- With my age and my health history, is allogeneic BMT a good option for me?
- How does BMT compare to other treatments?

Learn more about

- [This research study](#)
- [Non-Hodgkin lymphoma and follicular lymphoma](#)
- [Finding a donor](#)

Source

Sureda A, Zhang M-J, Dreger P, et al. Allogeneic hematopoietic stem cell transplantation for relapsed follicular lymphoma: A combined analysis on behalf of the Lymphoma Working Party of the EBMT and the Lymphoma Committee of the CIBMTR. *Cancer*, 2018. 124 (8): p. 1733-1742. doi: 10.1002/cncr.31264. Epub 2018 Feb 9. PMC5946312.

About this research summary

Ground-breaking research into blood and marrow transplant is happening every day. That research is having a significant impact on the survival and quality of life of thousands of transplant patients. But the research is written by scientists for scientists. By providing research news in an easy-to-understand way, patients, caregivers, and families have access to useful information that can help them make treatment decisions.

This information is provided on behalf of the Consumer Advocacy Committee of the CIBMTR[®] (Center for International Blood and Marrow Transplant Research[®]). The CIBMTR is a research collaboration between the National Marrow Donor Program[®]/Be The Match[®] and the Medical College of Wisconsin.
