



Guidelines needed for returning to work after transplant

87% of transplant centers say return-to-work programs would help patients

Staff at blood and marrow transplant (BMT) centers want to help people return to work after transplant. But there is little guidance, according to research.

People may spend months or years recovering from BMT. Many need flexibility and support from their doctors and employers as they return to work.

Work is important. It helps people connect with their community, improve their self-esteem, earn money and have health insurance.

Researchers wanted to know how transplant centers help people go back to work. So, they surveyed 45 transplant centers worldwide:

- 87% said returning to work is a problem for patients
- 36% have a return-to-work program, such as counseling, videos or printed materials

Staff said ideal return-to-work programs would have:

- Counseling
- Physical therapy
- Job training
- Doctors and nurses working with patients' employers to create a plan for return-to-work.

Two nonprofit groups have helpful guidelines for people with cancer, doctors and employers:

- Institute for Work and Health (in Canada)
- Anthony Nolan Foundation (in the United Kingdom)

Also, it may help to start planning return-to-work before the transplant and to keep in contact with your employer during the transplant. That way, when you are ready, you have a plan in place to go back to work.

What's next

Researchers surveyed 1,300 BMT patients about returning to work. They will publish results soon.

Ask your doctor

How will I know when I'm ready to return to work? What changes should I ask for from my employer to make it easier to go back to back to work?



Learn more about

- [Returning to work](https://www.bethematch.org) at BeTheMatch.org
- [Employment rights](https://www.bmtinfonet.org) at BMTInfoNet.org
- More [study summaries](https://www.cibmtr.org) at CIBMTR.org

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

Salit RB, Lee SJ, Burns LJ, et al. [Return-to-Work Guidelines and Programs for Post-Hematopoietic Cell Transplantation Survivors: An Initial Survey](#). *Biology of Blood and Marrow Transplantation*. 2020 Aug;26(8):1520-1526. Epub 2020 Apr 29. doi:10.1016/j.bbmt.2020.04.022.

