

Medicines keep away both GVHD and cancer

Scientists found a new combination of medicines that helps prevent graft-versus-host disease (GVHD). The medicines also help people with blood cancers live longer.

Blood and marrow transplants can cure blood cancers such as leukemias, lymphomas and myelodysplasia. However, after transplant, about half of people get GVHD. In GVHD, the cells from your donor (the graft) attack your own body's cells (the host). In some cases, GVHD can be life-threatening.

Scientists wanted to know which medicines can be given before and after transplant to prevent GVHD while keeping cancer away, helping people live longer and feel better.

They tested 3 different combinations of medicines. One combination worked best—people who took it lived longer without either GVHD or the cancer coming back. It included 3 medicines given after transplant: tacrolimus, mycophenolate mofetil and cyclophosphamide.

About 500 adults from around the U.S. volunteered to join this study. Almost half of the people received standard care, and the other half were randomly assigned to 1 of the 3 medicine combos. Another study is planned to compare the best combo with standard care.

Consider asking your doctor

What are the best medicines for me to prevent GVHD?

Learn more about

- [This study from its publication](#)
- [This study on ClinicalTrials.gov](#)
- [GVHD from BeTheMatch.org](#)
- [Clinical trials to prevent GVHD from JCCTP.org](#)

Source

Bolaños-Meade J, Reshef R, Fraser R, et al. Three prophylaxis regimens (tacrolimus, mycophenolate mofetil, and cyclophosphamide; tacrolimus, methotrexate, and bortezomib; or tacrolimus, methotrexate, and maraviroc) versus tacrolimus and methotrexate for prevention of graft-versus-host disease with haemopoietic cell transplantation with reduced-intensity conditioning: a randomised phase 2 trial with a non-randomised contemporaneous control group (BMT CTN 1203). *The Lancet Haematology*. 2019 Mar;6(3):e132-e43. doi: 10.1016/S2352-3026(18)30221-7. PMC6503965.

About this research summary

The Blood and Marrow Transplant Clinical Trials Network (BMT CTN) conducts research that helps thousands of people live longer and feel better.

