Guidelines needed for returning to school after transplant

Schoolchildren need more support

Doctors recommend that children to return to school at different times after blood or marrow transplant (BMT).

BMT can cure childhood leukemia, sickle cell disease, and other disorders. But BMT can cause kids to miss a lot of school—usually a few months, but sometimes more than a year.

It takes weeks or months to prepare for BMT. And as long as 1 or 2 years after BMT, kids can catch infections more easily. That's because they may need medicines called immunosuppressants. After BMT, some children have side effects that need treatment, too.

And while it's important to keep kids healthy, school is also vital. At school, kids make friends and learn skills needed later for work or college.

According to a poll of 122 US doctors caring for pediatric, teenager, and young adult patients, there is a lack of consensus on the best timing after BMT to return to school There is not much research to help, but this study sets the stage for more research to be done.

To create guidelines about kids returning to school safely, many people should work together:
- Children
- Infectious disease doctors
- Parents and caregivers
- Physician assistants and nurses
- Psychologists
- Social workers
- Teachers
- Transplant doctors

Learn more about
- Going back to school at NMDP.org
- Clinical trials for children and teens at CTsearchsupport.org
- More study summaries at CIBMTR.org

Source

Bhatt NS, Meyer CL, Mau LW, et al. Return to school practices after hematopoietic cell transplantation: a survey of transplant centers in the United States. Bone Marrow Transplantation. 2024. Epub 2024/02/21. PMID: 38378916. doi: 10.1038/s41409-024-02239-w.

About this research summary

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