CIBMTR Research News

Infections are common after CAR-T cells for multiple myeloma

More than 1 in 4 people who got ide-cel had infections



A new treatment for multiple myeloma increases the chances of serious infections. Doctors need to watch patients closely for 3 months after patients receive idecabtagene vicleucel (ide-cel).

Multiple myeloma is a blood cancer that can be treated with ide-cel. Ide-cel is a chimeric antigen receptor T-cell (CAR-T). Ide-cel is made by training a patient's own white blood cells to attack myeloma cancer cells.

Scientists studied 800 adults who got ide-cel during 2021 to 2023. They looked at how patients were doing in the first 100 days after ide-cel. They found that 72 out of 100 (72%) had no infections. But 28 out of 100 patients (28%) had at least 1 infection.

People were more likely to get infections after ide-cel if they:

- Already had an infection just before getting ide-cel
- Were too sick to do their normal activities before ide-cel
- Had serious effects from ide-cel called cytokine release syndrome or neurotoxicity

Doctors need to watch people closely for infections and treat them quickly.

The study found that about 1 year after ide-cel, 72 out of 100 patients were alive. And 28 out of 100 patients had died, mostly from myeloma. About 8% (8 of 100) deaths were due to infections.

Keep in mind

This study only looked at ide-cel for multiple myeloma; the results would be different for other CAR-T cells and diseases.

Learn more about

- Protecting yourself from infection at NMDP.org
- More study summaries at CIBMTR.org
- NMDP Patient Support Center at NMDP.org or 1 (888) 999-6743

Source

Wudhikarn K, Gowda L, Ye Q, et al. Infections Within 100 Days of Idecabtagene Vicleucel and Impact on Survival for Relapsed/Refractory Multiple Myeloma: A CIBMTR Analysis. Transplantation and Cellular Therapy. 2026. Epub 2026 June 27. doi: 10.1016/j.jtct.2026.06.029. PMC13382910.

About this research summary

CIBMTR® (Center for International Blood and Marrow Transplant Research®) thanks study participants. This information is provided on behalf of the Consumer Advocacy Committee of CIBMTR. CIBMTR is a research collaboration between the Medical College of Wisconsin and NMDP.

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This plain-language summary was written by Jennifer Motl at the Medical College of Wisconsin and reviewed by an author of the full article. ©2026 by CIBMTR, license CC BY-SA 4.0.