

Second Transplant Helpful for Myeloma Relapse

Important Points:

- 25% of myeloma patients whose cancer returned after their first transplant went into a complete remission after a second transplant.
- Patients who were in remission for at least 1.5 years after their first transplant lived almost twice as long after their second transplant as patients who relapsed in less than 1.5 years.

Patients with multiple myeloma often get an autologous hematopoietic cell transplant (auto transplant). An auto transplant uses the patient's own stem cells. After the transplant, some patients go into remission, meaning their cancer goes away.

Other patients relapse after their first transplant, meaning their cancer returns. When that happens, doctors have a few different options of how to treat the patient. One option is to do a second auto transplant.

Some studies have shown that second transplants are helpful for myeloma patients who have relapsed. However, those studies only included patients at one hospital. This study looked at patients from many different hospitals. Researchers feel more certain about their results when they look at patients from many different hospitals.

The researchers in this study looked at 187 myeloma patients from 55 hospitals who relapsed after their first auto transplant. These patients had a second auto transplant in the years 1995-2008. After their second transplant, 25% (1 in 4) were in remission for at least 5 years.

Myeloma patients whose remissions were longer after their first transplant did better than patients whose remissions were shorter. Patients who were in remission for at least 1.5 years after their first transplant lived almost twice as long after their second transplant.

This study shows that a second transplant is safe for multiple myeloma patients, and it helps some patients live longer.

Source:

Salvage second hematopoietic cell transplantation in myeloma. Michaelis LC, Saad A, Zhong X, Le-Rademacher J, Freytes CO, Marks DI, Lazarus HM, Bird JM, Holmberg L, Kamble RT, Kumar S, Lill M, Meehan KR, Saber W, Schriber J, Tay J, Vogl DT, Wirk B, Savani BN, Gale RP, Vesole DH, Schiller GJ, Abidi M, Anderson KC, Nishihori T, Kalaycio ME, Vose JM, Moreb JS, Drobyski W, Munker R, Roy V, Ghobadi A, Holland HK, Nath R, To LB, Maiolino A, Kassim AA, Giralta SA, Landau H, Schouten HC, Maziarz RT, Michael J, Kindwall-Keller T, Stiff PJ, Gibson J, Lonial S, Krishnan A, Dispenzieri A, Hari P. *Biology of Blood and Marrow Transplantation*. 2013 May 01;19(5):760-766. Epub 2013 Jan 05.