



More African Americans can get blood or marrow transplant

Study shows half-matched and cord blood transplants are acceptable

Only 1 in 5 African Americans who need a blood or marrow transplant (BMT) can find a matched donor. A transplant from a half-matched or cord blood donor also can help, a new study shows. This may allow more African Americans to get a life-saving transplant.

Researchers looked at medical records of about 370 African Americans who got BMT for a blood cancer, such as leukemia, lymphoma or myelodysplastic syndrome. There were two types of transplants: half-matched (haploidentical) or cord blood.

What are half-matched and cord blood transplants?

- A half-matched donor is usually your mom, your dad or your child; and sometimes your brother or sister.
- Umbilical cord blood is donated after a baby is born. Cord blood is often thrown away. But, it can be donated and used for a life-saving transplant.

Which kind is better?

Two years after transplant, people in both groups (half-matched and cord blood) had equal chances of being alive and cancer-free. However, the group that got cord blood was more likely to have a bad effect called graft-versus-host disease (GVHD).

This might be because the people who got a half-matched transplant also got a medicine to called cyclophosphamide, which prevents GVHD. This medicine is not usually used with cord blood.

Another group of researchers is studying whether this medicine can be used with cord blood.

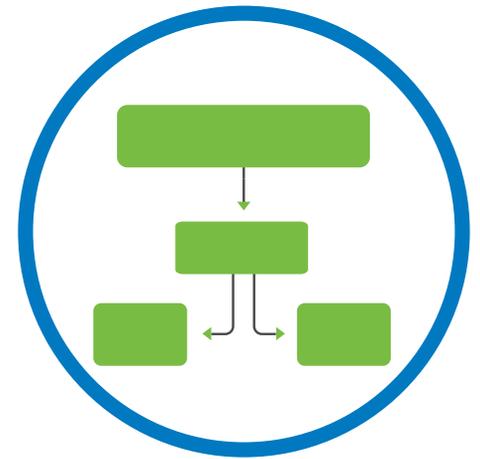
Keep in mind

Overall, this was a small study. However, it is still the largest of its kind so far. More research is needed.

Also, it's helpful for people of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds to consider donating blood and marrow, so more people can find a matched donor.

Ask your doctor

What treatment is best for me?



Learn more about

- [Race and matching at BeTheMatch.org](https://www.bethematch.org/)
- [Cord blood trials at CTsearchsupport.org](https://www.ctsearchsupport.org/)
- [Haploidentical trials at CTsearchsupport.org](https://www.ctsearchsupport.org/)
- [More study summaries at CIBMTR.org](https://www.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

Solomon SR, Martin AS, Zhang MJ, et al. [Optimal Donor for African Americans with Hematologic Malignancy: HLA-Haploidentical Relative or Umbilical Cord Blood Transplant](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/3250013/). *Biology of Blood and Marrow Transplant*. 2020 Oct;26(10):1930-1936. doi: 10.1016/j.bbmt.2020.06.029. Epub 2020 Jul 7. PMC7530013.

