

Quick testing for a blood or marrow donor helps people with leukemia

Some types of acute myeloid leukemia (AML), a blood cancer, have a higher risk of the cancer coming back after treatment. A blood and marrow transplant (BMT) can help, but finding a matched donor takes weeks or months. Only 4 in 10 people get BMT at the best time, early after the disease is controlled (first remission). First remission may happen about a month after treatment begins.

Doctors wanted to see if fast-tracking 2 tests could help. First, they tested people's bone marrow. This test, called cytogenetics, shows if a person has a high-risk type of AML. Those with high-risk disease then had a second blood test, called HLA typing, to help find a matched BMT donor either in their family or on a bone marrow donor registry.

Fast-tracking tests right after a person learns they have AML helps people get results faster. Usually, people don't get these tests until after they meet with a transplant doctor.

People who had fast-tracked tests were more likely to get a BMT.

- About 65% (7 in 10 people) who got the fast-tracked tests got a BMT in this study
- About 40% (4 in 10 people) who didn't get the fast-tracked tests got a BMT, in previous studies

In this study, people who got BMT lived longer. Two years after the study began, about 48% of those who got BMT were alive, compared with 35% of those who did **not** get BMT.

The study included about 740 adults who had AML. Of those, about 110 had high-risk AML. Transplant centers in the US and Canada treated these people during 2012-2018.

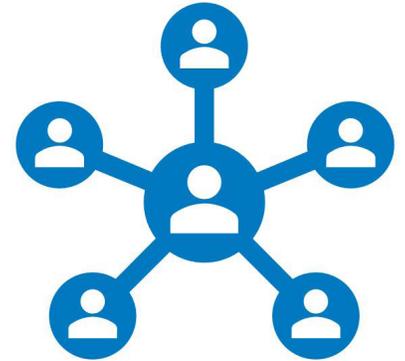
Of the people with high-risk AML, most were male and white: About 60% were male, almost 90% were white. Less than 10% were black or African American, Asian, or American Indian. About 10% were Hispanic.

Keep in mind

Each person is different. BMT can have serious side effects.

Ask your doctor

- When do I need tests for cytogenetics and HLA matching?
- When should my doctor start looking for a BMT donor?



Learn more about

- This trial, [NCT01802333](https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/study/NCT01802333), at [ClinicalTrials.gov](https://clinicaltrials.gov)
- [Finding a donor at BeTheMatch.org](https://www.bethematch.org)
- More [study summaries](https://www.cibmtr.org) 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

Page J, Othus M, Garcia-Manero G, et al. [Rapid donor identification improves survival in high-risk first-remission patients with acute myeloid leukemia](https://doi.org/10.1200/JOP.19.00133). *JCO Oncology Practice*. doi:10.1200/JOP.19.00133. Epub 2020 Jan 27.

Trial sponsor

National Cancer Institute, [cancer.gov](https://www.cancer.gov)

