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Autologous stem cell transplantation: Understanding your journey

Information for transplant-eligible patients with multiple myeloma



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All the photographs of people in this booklet are models and are included just to illustrate the publication.

Introduction

This booklet is intended to provide you with information about the treatment journey with autologous stem cell transplantation (ASCT). You may have decided to read this booklet to learn more about ASCT and how it works, or your doctor may have recommended this booklet to you because they are considering ASCT as a treatment option for you.

'Autologous' is defined as 'taken from the same person'

Why have an ASCT?

An ASCT is a type of treatment for patients with blood cancers, such as multiple myeloma and leukaemia.¹

Undergoing an ASCT can provide many benefits in treating your condition, but can also come with risks. $^{\!\!\!1,2}$

See page 6 for more information on the risks of ASCT.

What does an ASCT involve?

An ASCT is made up of three steps:1

- · Collecting blood cell-making stem cells from your blood or bone marrow
- · Administering high-dose chemotherapy to destroy the myeloma cells in your body
- Returning the stem cells to your blood where they travel to the bone marrow, encouraging the growth of new blood cells

What to expect?

Including receiving anti-myeloma therapy beforehand, your ASCT journey can take up to 32 weeks.^{1,2*}

After your transplant, your recovery time could range from three months up to one year.

Due to the nature of the treatment, it is common to experience some side effects, please contact your doctor if these get severe. You can also seek out psychological help if you feel you need it.

At some points during your treatment, you may need to stay in the hospital for an extended period of time. This time will vary for each person.



The main risks that come from an ASCT are the side effects related to the anti-myeloma treatment and high-dose chemotherapy/radiotherapy.^{1,2}

There is a long recovery time after receiving an ASCT, which can disrupt your life for up to a year.¹

You may need to spend longer in hospital if there are any complications during your ASCT.¹

Response to an ASCT will differ from patient to patient, and the desired results cannot always be guaranteed. $^{\rm 2}$

Before you decide to go ahead with an ASCT, your doctor will discuss the benefits and risks with you in greater detail, so you can make a fully informed decision.

Starting your journey

Before your transplant

To ensure your ASCT goes smoothly, you will need several tests before, during and after your treatment. Many of these tests may be familiar to you.¹





The main test you'll require is a bone marrow aspiration and biopsy.

This is where a sample of your bone marrow is taken from near the hip bone. The biopsy results from this can be used after your transplant to check whether the treatment is working.¹



See page 13 for a glossary of these icons.

Your treatment timeline

This timeline will guide you through what treatments you will have, when you will have them, and what you're likely to experience.

See page 13 for a glossary of the icons you'll see on this timeline.





Up to 24 weeks

You will be given up to 24 weeks of anti-myeloma treatment to minimise the number of myeloma cells in your bone marrow.²



1 Week

You will be given medication each day. This will increase the production and movement of stem cells from your bone marrow to your bloodstream.^{1,2}



1 Week

Your stem cells will be collected through a blood or bone marrow sample. If your cells are taken from your bone marrow, they will be taken near your hip, and you may be put under general



During your transplant

Your stem cells will be kept frozen in storage until they

are needed to be transplanted back into your body.^{1,2}

Up to 6 weeks

You will receive a high dose of chemotherapy to destroy the myeloma cells in your body. This could be with a combination of two or more chemotherapies or radiation therapy. A common side effect from this treatment is fatique.²



Up to 6 weeks

Your stem cells will be put back into your body the same way you would receive a blood transfusion. This can take several hours. Often there are no side effects from the infusion. After your treatment you may need to spend up to 3 weeks in hospital.^{1,2}





This wave shows the approximate change in your discomfort level during the

different stages of your treatment. However, this will vary for every patient.

After your transplant



You will need to recover with supportive care and regular follow-up appointments. These will involve several regular tests to see how you're responding.

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You will be particularly susceptible to infections, so you need to be mindful of good hygiene and avoid people who are unwell For more information, refer to the 'Stay healthy, stay informed' booklet.



About 3 months

You will receive a bone marrow biopsy to check for myeloma cells. You may also need other scans to check for any changes in the bone.²

Consolidation & maintenance

You may receive a course of anti-myeloma treatment to further reduce any remaining myeloma cells and extend the results of vour treatment.²





Use a calendar to help organise your follow-up visits.



You will need a caregiver to support you in your recovery (a member of your family or a close friend). They will need to accompany you to help identify any unexpected complications.¹

Over time you will gradually feel stronger and more confident in going about your day-to-day activities.1



Carers can refer to the 'Guidance for carers' booklet. Your healthcare provider will also be able to teach your caregiver(s) how to support you during your recovery.¹

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How your stem cells are transplanted

1. Collection

Your blood is taken through an intravenous (IV) in one of your arms, where the stem cells are separated out by a machine. Your blood is then returned through an IV in your other arm.¹



3. Transplant

Your stem cells are then transferred back in to your body through an IV in your arm. These will travel to the bone marrow and create new healthy blood cells.¹



2. Chemotherapy

You are then given chemotherapy through an IV in your arm. This is to destroy the remaining myeloma cells.2



Glossary of icons

Carer

You will need the help of a carer during this time frame



Зня



Doctor

Home

This treatment can be performed at home



Long stay

Hours

Injection

by an injection

This treatment can be performed at a hospital

This treatment may mean you

have a long stay in hospital

This is an estimate of how

long this treatment will take

This treatment will be given



Bathe or shower daily



Wear clean clothes daily



Į

Intravenous infusion This treatment will be given by an IV infusion

Use a soft toothbrush and mouthwash



Do gentle exercises regularly







Anaesthetic

Radiotherapy

This treatment may require

local or general anaesthetic

This treatment involves

the use of radiotherapy







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How could you benefit from an ASCT?

If you choose to have an ASCT, it may help you live longer and improve your quality of life.^{1,2}







With ASCT, you are not alone



There were over 48.000 total stem cell transplants across Europe in 2019.³

Over 43.000 individual patients had nearly 20,000 allogenic stem cell transplants and over 28,000 ASCT procedures.3

Rest assured, the process of ASCT has been around for 30 years. Patients' survival continues to improve with advances in technology, procedures and supportive care.^{1,4}



Your notes

Your notes

References

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- 3. Passweg JR, et al. Bone Marrow Transplant. 2021;56(7):1651–1664.
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This information is intended for patients with multiple myeloma and is intended to inform patients about the clinical characteristics and treatment of their condition. You are receiving this information through the doctor treating you.



