

Glossary

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Glossary

A

Allograft

A transplant using cells from a healthy donor.

Autograft

A transplant using the patient's own cells. Bone marrow is collected, diseased cells removed and healthy cells returned to the patient.

Autologous

Using the patient's own "cleaned up" bone marrow

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B

Bone marrow

Found in the centre of all large bones. It is where primitive blood stem cells (blood stem cells) are produced. Blood stem cells develop into the red and white cells in the blood.

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C

Chemotherapy

The use of chemical substances to treat disease. In its modern-day use, it refers almost exclusively to drugs that are used to treat cancer.

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D

Donor

The person who donates their bone marrow or peripheral blood stem cells for transplant to a patient

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E

Engraftment

The acceptance of the donor's healthy blood stem cells when they are infused into the patient's own blood stream. If they are engrafted, the donor's blood stem cells then begin to produce normal blood cells.

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G

G-CSF

If a donor chooses to donate their peripheral blood stem cells they receive an injection of Granulocyte colony stimulating factor (G-CSF). This will activate and increase their blood stem cell production and encourage the cells to move from their bone marrow to their circulating blood where they will be collected for transplant to a patient.

Graft

Another name for the bone marrow or peripheral blood stem cells that are taken from the donor and given to the patient.

GvHD

Graft versus host disease. A patient's immune system normally identifies 'foreign' cells in their body, such as bacteria or viruses, and attacks them, helping to protect against infection. Sometimes the patient's new immune system recognises the patient as different from the bone marrow donor. As a result the donor's white cells, living in the patient, will attack the patient (its host).

GvL

Graft versus Leukaemia (GvL) is a beneficial immune response in which white blood cells from the donor attack and destroy patient leukaemia cells.

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H

Haematology

Study of the blood

Harvest

The process of taking the bone marrow or peripheral blood stem cells from the donor. The two procedures are bone marrow transplant or donation of peripheral blood stem cells.

HLA

human leucocyte antigen - the name for the molecules which have to be matched between the donor and the patient. These molecules exist in many very similar but different forms.

Host

The patient (recipient) who receives donated stem cells

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L

Leukaemia

Leukaemia is a cancer of the white blood cells. The four main types of leukaemia are

- Acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (ALL) - a cancer of immature lymphocyte cells - lymphoblasts.
- Acute myeloid leukaemia (AML) - a cancer of the immature myeloid cells. This disease occurs mainly in adults but can also affect children.
- Chronic lymphocytic leukaemia (CLL) - a cancer of the lymphocyte cells. The most common type of leukaemia affecting adults. Very rare in children.
- Chronic myeloid leukaemia (CML) - a cancer of the neutrophils cells. Rare in children.

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M

Match

Patient and donor have the same tissue (HLA) types

Mis-match

Patient and donor have different tissue (HLA) types

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P

Peripheral blood stem cells

The blood stem cells that circulate the body.

Phlebotomist

Phlebotomists are specialists who collect blood from people for examination in laboratories. When they work with Anthony Nolan, they take small blood samples from volunteers at our donor recruitment clinics. The samples are then taken to our laboratories for testing.

Potential match

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R

Radiotherapy

The treatment of disease by radiation.

Red blood cell

A cell type present in blood involved in transporting oxygen throughout the body

Related donor

A donor who is blood-related to the patient.

Remission

The patient's condition when their disease is 'on the mend'.

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T

Tissue-type

An individual's tissue-type is defined by the characteristics of six genes (A, B, C, DRB1, DQB1 and DPB1), collectively known as the human leukocyte antigen group (HLA). Testing for HLA groups, known as tissue-typing, is usually performed on a small blood sample and involves analysing the genes that code for the HLA proteins.

Transplant

Surgical transfer of living cells

Transplant centres

The hospitals where the donors donate, and the patients receive, their bone marrow. For reasons of confidentiality and anonymity, the patient and their specific donor are always treated in separate transplant centres.

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U

Unrelated donor

A donor who is not blood related to the patient. Approximately 70% of all patients in the UK who receive a bone marrow transplant receive it from an unrelated donor.

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Volunteer donor

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W

White blood cell

A type of cell present in blood involved in the immune response to fight infection.

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