

Paediatric haematology

# Autologous bone marrow harvest

## A guide for families

### Introduction

Your doctor has decided that your child needs to have an autologous bone marrow harvest. All children having a bone marrow transplant from an unrelated donor or a haploidentical donor (where there is a 50 per cent match) will need a bone marrow harvest ("back-up harvest") this leaflet will explain what a bone marrow harvest involves.

### What is an autologous bone marrow harvest?

An autologous bone marrow harvest is a collection of your child's own bone marrow which is stored in the stem cell laboratory. It is carried out before your child is admitted for their bone marrow transplant (BMT) you may also hear it referred to as a 'back up' harvest.

### Why does my child need an autologous bone marrow harvest?

Your child is due to have a bone marrow transplant and as a safety precaution; their bone marrow will be stored and kept for five years after their transplant. At the end of this time it will either be used for research or destroyed. You will be contacted and informed before the cells are used.

It is only used in cases where complications have occurred and the child's immune system requires 'rescuing' with their own bone marrow. In this circumstance the child's immune system will be restored but they will have their original haematology condition returned.

### What does the autologous bone marrow harvest involve?

The procedure is performed under general anesthesia. The doctor will then insert a hollow needle into both sides of the hip bones. Two doctors will be performing the procedure at the same time and there will be two operation sites where bone marrow is collected, called aspiration sites. The amount of bone marrow stored is calculated according to your child's weight. It may be necessary for your child to have a blood transfusion following the procedure.

It is important that your child receives irradiated blood products for at least four weeks before having the autologous bone marrow harvest., your named BMT coordinator will have contacted your local hospital to ensure that blood provided is irradiated, and will have given you an 'irradiated blood product warning card'. This should be presented whenever you seek medical care and especially when you attend for routine cross matching and blood or blood product transfusions.

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## What happens after the test?

Your child will be able to recover from the procedure in the children's haematology day unit and will then be transferred to one of the inpatient wards at St Mary's Hospital. This procedure involves an overnight stay. The aspiration sites will have a dressing and will be checked by the nurses. If there is any ooze or bleeding they will be changed before your child is discharged from hospital.

Following a review by the medical team your child will be able to go home the following day. Results of the bone marrow collection will be discussed with your child's consultant when you are seen in clinic.

## When your child goes home

The aspiration site may feel uncomfortable for a day or two afterwards. Your child will need paracetamol, which should be given according to the instructions. The dressing may fall off on its own, if not it can be soaked off in the bath or shower three days after the procedure.

Your child should be able to return to school five days after the procedure, but they should avoid any contact sports for approximately two weeks. Younger children should also avoid any rough and tumble play for two weeks.

You should call your named nurse or the day care unit if any of the following occur:

- the aspiration sites bleed
- the aspiration sites ooze a lot of fluid
- the biopsy site is still painful five days after the procedure and is not eased by paracetamol
- there is redness or warmth around the site or a temperature develops, as this is a sign of infection.

## Who do I contact for more information?

**BMT coordinators:** 07766991070

**Paediatric haematology day care unit:** 0203 3125095 / 020 3312 5096

Additional patient information is available on our website:



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## How do I make a comment about my visit?

If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3313 0088** (Charing Cross, Hammersmith and Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea hospitals), or **020 3312 7777** (St Mary's and Western Eye hospitals). You can also email PALS at **imperial.pals@nhs.net**. Alternatively, you may wish to express your concerns in **writing** to: Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street, London W2 1NY.

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille, or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team:

**imperial.patient.information@nhs.net**

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