Adult Blood Cancer Patients Benefit from New Treatments, New Clinic Space

Treatment advances – as well as the doubling and redesign of hematology clinic space – create important benefits for blood cancer patients, says Lloyd Damon, MD, director of the UCSF Adult Blood and Marrow Transplant and Hematologic Malignancies Program and chief of the UCSF Hematology Clinic.

A Breakthrough for Adult Haploidentical Transplants

Finding a fully matched human leukocyte antigen (HLA)-matched stem cell donor has long been a challenge for adults with blood cancer, says Damon. Umbilical cord blood units are also in short supply and, even when available, may not be large enough for an adult transplant.

When haploidentical (i.e., half-matched) transplants first came into practice, they offered promise. Yet in adults, concerns about graft versus host disease (GVHD) meant physicians had to remove all T-cells from the graft before transplant. The result was a severely compromised graft versus malignancy (GVM) effect.

Recently, however, researchers found it was possible to avert stripping T-cells from the haplo-donor before the transplant. Rather, after conditioning the recipient and performing the transplant, physicians wait until the graft T-cells begin to activate, typically on day three or four. Then physicians administer Cytoxan to purge the graft of these early T-cells and allow the graft’s stem cells to produce new T-cells that “believe” they are part of the host. This creates a tolerable level of GVHD, while optimizing the GVM effect.

“The field is moving quickly to make these types of transplants standard of care,” says Damon, who notes that the first two patients he has used this technique on are in remission and do not have severe graft versus host disease.

His group is also about to instigate a clinical trial to examine the safety and efficacy of doing these haploidentical transplants from blood, rather than bone marrow. “Because T-cells are more concentrated in the blood, there’s the possibility of generating more GVM effect and faster reconstitution of immunity,” says Damon. “It would also be easier on the donor and, theoretically, could be done on an outpatient basis.”

Evidence-Based Design Enhances Patient Convenience

Damon adds that his group has increased the number of outpatient autologous (self) transplants for multiple myeloma, something made possible in part by the clinic’s doubling in space when it moved to the fourth floor of the UCSF Ambulatory Care Center.

Practice manager Janelle Smith and an architectural team drew on focus groups of patients and staff members to create a patient-friendly space that facilitates more outpatient treatments and expanded hours – into the evening on most weekdays. The evidence-based redesign includes:

- A doubling of exam rooms from 8 to 16
- A large, bright waiting room that looks out on the Golden Gate Bridge.
- Infusion stations with wireless access, a private TV and a full view of eastern San Francisco
- A patient resource room
- Several rooms appropriate for patient and family meetings

To make a referral, please call (415) 353-2051. For more information, visit www.ucsfhealth.org/bmt.

Additional Services:

- UCSF Osher Center for Integrative Medicine
  Phone: (415) 353-7700
  Website: www.ucsfhealth.org/ocim

- Cancer Risk Program
  Phone: (415) 885-7779
  Website: www.ucsfhealth.org/cancerriskprogram

- Symptom Management Service
  Phone: (415) 885-7671 [885-SMS1]
  Website: cancer.ucsf.edu/sms
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USCF hematologists provide the best care possible for patients with acute and chronic blood conditions. These conditions include, but are not limited to, leukemia, lymphoma, myeloma, myelodysplastic syndromes, myeloproliferative neoplasms, aplastic anemia, immune thrombocytopenia, bleeding disorders, clotting disorders (thrombosis) and anemias.

In addition, USCF is a leader in blood and bone marrow transplants, which are used to treat a number of blood disorders. Our expert transplant team is comprised of doctors, nurses, social workers and additional health professionals who work together to care for individuals and their families throughout the transplant process.

**FEATURED PROGRAM**

**Adult Blood and Marrow Transplant and Hematologic Malignancies Program**

400 Parnassus Ave., Suite A-502, San Francisco, CA 94143
Phone: (415) 353-2051  |  Website: www.ucsfhealth.org/bmt

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**Resources for Physicians**

- **Physician Liaison Service**
  Phone: (800) 444-2559  
  Fax: (415) 353-4395  
  Email: referral.center@ucsfmedctr.org
  Contact the Physician Liaison Service for help in making a referral, assistance in obtaining follow-up information or to address other questions or concerns.

- **Transfer Center**
  Phone: (415) 353-9166  
  Fax: (415) 353-9172
  The Transfer Center is staffed 24 hours daily to coordinate the transfer of patients to UCSF Medical Center. The center provides quick access to our doctors and other members of our team. We evaluate the needs of each patient to ensure that appropriate care is provided. The center can also facilitate your patient’s return transfer.

- **Ida & Joseph Friend Cancer Resource Center**
  Phone: (415) 885-3693
  Website: cancer.ucsf.edu/crc
  The Cancer Resource Center (CRC) provides patients and their loved ones with information, classes, support groups and referrals to community resources. Most CRC programs are free.

- **Continuing Medical Education**
  Phone: (415) 476-4251
  Fax: (415) 476-0318
  Website: www.cme.ucsf.edu
  UC San Francisco’s Office of Continuing Medical Education offers more than 200 courses each year for physicians and allied health care professionals to improve their abilities as practitioners.

- **Information for Health Professionals**
  Website: www.ucsfhealth.org/healthprofessionals
  Our website for health professionals provides information regarding referrals, transfers, billing, consultations, insurance and more.

- **Clinical Trials**
  Phone: (877) 827-3222
  Email: communications@cc.ucsf.edu
  Clinical trials database: cancer.ucsf.edu/trials
  As home to one of the nation’s largest cancer clinical trials programs, we offer trials focusing on treatment, prevention, survivorship and quality of life. Review our database to find studies for which your patients may be eligible. To subscribe to a monthly email listing of open trials, send your name and email address to clinicaltrialist@ucsfmedctr.org.