HSCT Treatment for MS

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Studies looking into hematopoietic stem cell transplant (HSCT) for MS patients have yielded promising results. However, there are many possible complications associated with this relatively new procedure, which in many patients prevents MS relapses. By learning more about this unique treatment method for MS, you can decide if this is something worth exploring for your MS treatment needs.

HSCT treatment involves transplanting stem cells, either the patients own cells or cells from a donor, in the hopes that the new cells won't have the properties that caused the body to attack itself and will create healthy new cells. Before the transplant, patients are given a high dose of an immunosuppressant regimen for six days.

HSCT has been used to certain types of cancer for years, but its use as a treatment for MS is a relatively new endeavor.

Results of HSCT Treatment for MS

A study out of Colorado Blood Cancer Institute in Denver is looking into the effectiveness of HSCT treatment for patients with relapsing-remitting MS.

Researchers found that no new lesions were apparent in any of the 24 study participants one and two years after the procedure, although one did have new lesions at the six-month mark.

Over two years, only six participants had any kind of relapse, and MRI results showed disease in just two participants. Overall, patients experienced increased quality of life and functional ability.

The study will follow the participants for a total of five years.

Additional studies have shown less positive results when HSCT was preceded by immunosuppressant therapy and administered to patients with advanced, progressive MS. Experts are unsure if the treatment failed because it was not able to suppress MS autoimmune activity, or if the neurodegeneration had reached an independent stage.

Conclusion

It’s exciting to learn about how things have progressed in terms of treatment for MS. However, it's important to consider the possible risks associated. Talk to your doctor about whether HSCT treatment could be right for you.