

What's New in Blood Cancer?

Check out these advances in blood cancer research and treatment.

March 13, 2023 By [Liz Highleyman](#)

The American Society of Hematology annual meeting, focused on blood cancers, also took place in December. Bispecific antibodies—which attach to both cancer cells and T cells, engaging the T cells to attack the cancer—were the star of the show. Two of them, Tecvayli (teclistamab) and Lunsumio (mosunetuzumab), were recently approved. Others in the pipeline include epcoritamab for follicular lymphoma and diffuse large B-cell lymphoma, glofitamab for advanced large B-cell lymphoma and talquetamab for multiple myeloma. Another promising approach attaches a bispecific antibody to natural killer cells from umbilical cord blood.

Other studies challenge accepted treatment practices. In some cases, “giving less therapy and being less restrictive is actually better for patients, or at least no worse,” says Mikkael Sekeres, MD, of the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center in Miami. One study showed that patients with relapsed or refractory acute myeloid leukemia did not gain extra benefit from intensive chemotherapy before a stem cell transplant. Another showed that some people with mantle cell lymphoma who are treated with Imbruvica (ibrutinib) can skip stem cell transplantation altogether.

A third study found that cancer patients undergoing stem cell transplants don't need to stick to a restrictive neutropenic diet that excludes unpasteurized or fermented dairy products, raw or lightly cooked meat and seafood, many fresh fruits and vegetables and restaurant meals. “A protective diet is an unnecessary burden for our patients because it impairs quality of life without reducing infection incidence,” says Federico Stella, MD, of the Università degli Studi di Milano in Italy.
