

Patient Information

Haematology Department

Having a Bone Marrow Test

Date of bone marrow test:

Time:

This leaflet aims to explain to you a little of what having a bone marrow examination involves.

What is bone marrow?

The bone marrow is responsible for producing blood cells, these cells are constantly renewed within the bone marrow.

Why does the bone marrow need to be examined?

Problems with the blood are sometimes difficult to sort out and looking at the cells as they are being made can be very helpful.

Where is it test done?

Most patients come to the haematology day unit for their test.

How long does the test take?

The test itself only takes about 10-15 minutes

Who will do the test?

A haematology doctor or nurse will do the test.

Do I need any special preparation?

You need no special preparation before hand. You may like to bring a



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friend or relative who can provide moral support and take you home afterwards.

You may be asked to consider donating some of your bone marrow for research purposes. If this is the case, more information will be given to you at the time.

How is the test done?

You will need to lie on a bed or couch for the test to be taken. It is usually not necessary to undress and it is helpful if you could wear clothing that allows easy access to your hips.

The test will be undertaken using a 'local' anaesthetic which is injected where the sample is to be taken.

The sample is usually taken from the back of the hip-bone (the pelvis) although occasionally the breast bone is used.

Will the test be painful?

Many people have no problem with the procedure but others do find it painful. Although the procedure is over quite quickly, if you think you might have problems it may be possible to give you a sedative. This would need to be discussed before the day of your test as sedation is not suitable for everyone and additional arrangements are required.

Sedation

Sedation is administered through a cannula into a vein in your hand or arm. It will make you drowsy and relaxed but you will not be unconscious. You should still hear what is being said to you and be able to follow simple instructions.

Sedation can occasionally cause problems with breathing, heart rate and blood pressure. Older patients and those with significant health problems (for example those with heart or chest problems) may not be considered suitable for sedation for this reason.

While you are sedated you will have your pulse, blood pressure, breathing rate and oxygen levels monitored by a doctor or nurse so that if any problems occur they can be quickly and easily dealt with.

Once the procedure is over you will need to stay in hospital until the effects of the sedation have started to wear off and your pulse, blood pressure etc are back to normal. Your memory may be temporarily affected and you will not be able to drive yourself home, so you should have a friend or relative

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to accompany you and remain with you for at least four hours after the procedure.

Advice following the test:

- If you have had sedation please do not drive, operate machinery or sign any legal documents for 24 hours.
- If sedation has been given, it is recommended that you do not drink alcohol for 12 hours afterwards.
- After the test you will have a small skin puncture that will need a dressing. This dressing can be removed after twenty four hours and it will then be safe to have a bath or shower.
- You may experience some aching at the site of the test later on in the day and we normally recommend that you take two paracetamol if you experience discomfort (do not exceed 8 tablets in 24 hours).

If you experience further problems when you are at home please, do not hesitate to contact the ward or day unit.

Telephone numbers; -

Day Unit - 024 7696 5490 or 024 7696 5491

Ward 34 - 024 7696 5390 or 024 7696 5391

How long will it take to get the result?

The results of the test can take up to two weeks. You will be given a clinic appointment to discuss these results.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, we will do our best to meet your needs. Please contact The Department of Haematology on 024 7696 5390.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

Produced by the staff from the former Arden Cancer Network incorporating; Alexandra Hospital, Redditch, George Elliott Hospital. Nuneaton, University Hospitals Coventry & Warwickshire, St Cross Hospital, Rugby, Warwick Hospital

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