

Asian Centre for Blood & Bone Marrow Transplantation

# Marrow-thon for transplants

STAR HEALTH REPORT

Blood cancer is common nowadays. With trending of the disease, its treatment options 'stem cell transplantation' or 'bone marrow transplantation' are also named frequently. Blood stem cell transplantation (or haematopoietic cell transplantation, HCT) is a term that includes bone marrow, peripheral blood stem cell and umbilical cord blood transplantation.

While more accurately termed blood stem cell or haematopoietic cell transplantation, the term "bone marrow transplant" is often used interchangeably as transplants were performed from a bone marrow source historically. Nowadays, apart from the bone marrow, blood stem cells may be obtained from the peripheral blood, bone marrow or umbilical cord blood, and hence "blood stem cell transplant" is a broader and more accurate term.

Diseases that may be treated with a blood stem cell transplant include Acute myeloid leukaemia, Acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, Multiple myeloma, Non Hodgkin lymphomas, Hodgkin lymphoma, Myelodysplastic syndromes, Aplastic anaemia, Myeloproliferative neoplasms, Chronic myeloid leukaemia, Chronic lymphocytic leukaemia, Severe autoimmune diseases.

A centre of excellence for blood stem



A part of blood stem cell transplantation process that cures a varying range of diseases, mostly cancers.

cell transplantation is the Asian Centre for Blood & Bone Marrow Transplantation (ACBBMT). It was set up in 2013 under the Comprehensive Transplant Centre (CTC) at Gleneagles Hospital in Singapore. With the Asian Centre for Liver Diseases & Transplantation (ACLDT) established as the region's leading liver diseases and

transplantation clinic, Dr Yvonne Loh, formerly the Medical Director of the Haematopoietic Stem Cell Transplant programme in Singapore General Hospital (SGH) where she has done close to 100 transplants, has been appointed to spearhead this new ACBBMT.

ACBBMT aims to provide optimum

clinical care for patients with blood disorders, particularly blood cancers such as leukaemia, myeloma and lymphoma, and blood stem cell (including bone marrow and cord blood) transplantation.

Dr Yvonne Loh, the leading transplant physician, Haematologist and Medical Director of the ACBBMT shared her insight about bone marrow transplants and its the recent practice.

Every day Dr Loh works on the front line in the fight against the most common forms of blood disease including leukaemia and lymphoma as a clinician. Nobody knows better than she does how a transplant can not only save a life but just the chance of survival transforms despair into hope for patients and their families.

Dr Loh informs that up to 60 years, bone marrow transplant can give potential benefit to patients. But child Leukaemia is easier to treat and children usually respond to chemotherapy.

According to Dr Loh, infection is a bigger problem than graft rejection following a bone marrow transplantation. The process itself is not much complicated, but the quality of total care from assessment to post transplant care is very crucial that requires a very skilled and experienced team handling the patient. Dr Loh assures that they offer that level of care at their centre with a team of experienced clinician and technical staff at ACBBMT.

## HEALTHbulletin



### Short walks could cut diabetes risk in seniors

A 15-minute walk after each meal could prevent older people developing type-2 diabetes, a recent study published in Diabetes Care has found. The post-meal walks control blood sugar as well as one long walk, researchers suggested.

### Vitamin D can help prevent hypertension

The world's largest study to examine the link between vitamin D levels and hypertension has found that low levels of Vitamin D can be a major cause of hypertension. Researchers presented their findings at the annual conference of the European Society of Human Genetics (ESHG).

### Steroid injection therapy for back pain may increase risk of spinal fracture

A retrospective study in the Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery (JBJS) revealed that higher number of Lumbar Epidural Steroid Injection (LESI) for back pain may lead to increased bone fragility over time. While injection therapy is useful in some cases, it should be approached cautiously for patients at risk for fractures associated with osteoporosis, researchers suggest.

## Vaccine doesn't save lives, it is the vaccination in fact

PROF M KARIM KHAN

Vaccination plays a central role in reduction of infant mortality and morbidity due to various infectious diseases. Ensuring vaccination to every child specially below one year is essential to achieve the target of MDG 4 that is to reduce our infant mortality rate to 35/1000 live birth by 2015.

With a view to enhancing knowledge on vaccination practice and discussing about further strategy to move forward, Asia Vaccine Congress 2013 ended in Cebu Island Philippine. About 17 delegates from Bangladesh also joined in this congress to share the vaccination status, challenges and future policy. The delegates stressed on strengthen-

ing existing Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) and introduce more life saving and cost-effective vaccines.

In Philippine and some other Asian countries, Rotavirus and Pneumococcal vaccine have been included in their EPI schedule. Few more vaccines are in pipeline to be added soon like Meningococcal vaccine, Hepatitis A, Typhoid vaccine. A newer Cholera vaccine is being introduced in some parts of Africa where Cholera is an endemic or epidemic.

Experts and speakers in the summit urged researchers and scientists to do more extensive work to find out effective vaccines against HIV, Malaria, Bronchiolitis, Shigella. They also asked for global initiative

combined with public-private partnership to develop vaccine to eradicate all the important public health infectious diseases.

The summit also highlighted the crucial need for vaccine coverage to preterm, low birth weight babies, refugees, people in slums and street children who need the vaccine most.

Proper personal hygiene maintenance along with safe, effective, affordable vaccination in proper time will definitely help to eradicate many more infectious diseases in near future. Only such united and sincere effort can make this world more suitable for our beloved children.

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## THE GIFT OF LIFE

### More voluntary blood donors needed

The need for blood and blood products is increasing every year, and many patients requiring life-saving transfusion do not have timely access to safe blood and blood products. Regular voluntary unpaid blood donors are the safest source of blood as there are fewer blood-borne infections among these donors than among people who give blood in exchange for money or who donate for family members in emergencies.

World Health Organisation (WHO) calls for all countries to obtain 100% of their supplies of blood and blood products from voluntary unpaid blood donors by 2020.

Currently, 60 countries collect 100% of their blood supply from voluntary unpaid blood donors. More progress is needed, with 73 countries still collecting more than 50% of their blood supply from replacement or paid donors.

Providing safe and adequate supplies of blood and blood products should be an integral part of every country's national health care policy and infrastructure. WHO provides policy guidance and technical assistance to support countries in developing national blood systems based on voluntary unpaid blood donations, and implementing quality systems to ensure that safe and quality blood and blood products are available and used appropriately for all people who need them.

Source: World Health Organisation



### Health Tips

### Helping kids conquer bedwetting

When children are developmentally ready, parents can take steps to help them stay dry through the night. The U.S. Kidney and Urologic Diseases Information Clearing house lists these suggestions for parents to help prevent bedwetting in children:

- Encourage your child to drink plenty of fluids during the day, to avoid drinking too much at bedtime.
- Do not give your child caffeinated drinks such as soda or tea.
- Let your child have one drink with dinner, but make that the last drink before bed.
- Make sure your child goes to the bathroom right before bed.
- Be supportive and do not scold your child if he or she wets the bed.
- Offer plenty of praise when your child stays dry all night.



/StarHealthBD

## Knowing for better living

### In Bangladesh ...

Every year **57** thousand people die due to tobacco consumption !

Avoid tobacco consumption

Exercise regularly

Drink plenty of water

Keep away from stressful situations

Consult your Doctor



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