



Patient & Family Guide

2024

Bone Marrow Test



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Bone Marrow Test

Why is a bone marrow test done?

This test can help diagnose and treat medical problems (like bone marrow disorders, blood disorders, and some types of cancer).

What is a bone marrow test?

- There is spongy tissue inside your bones. This tissue is called bone marrow. Blood cells are made in the bone marrow.
- There are 2 ways to remove bone marrow for testing:
 - › **Bone marrow aspiration:** a needle is used to take out a sample of liquid cells.
 - › **Bone marrow biopsy:** a very small slice of bone marrow is removed.
- The sample is studied in the lab under a microscope. The sample will show the size, number, and shape of the blood cells in your bone marrow.

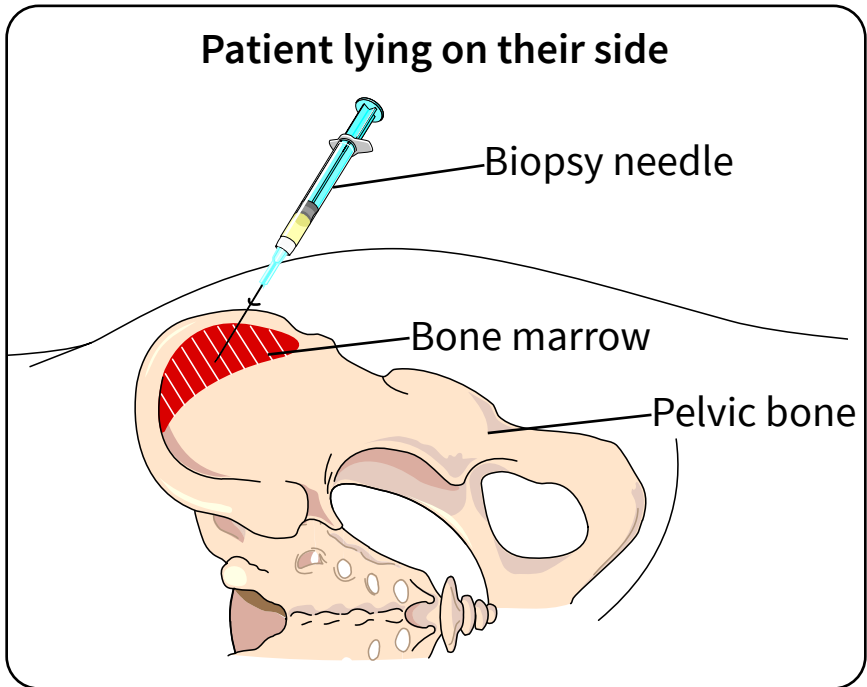
How do I get ready for this test?

- Tell the hematologist (doctor who specializes in blood conditions) or nurse practitioner (NP) who specializes in hematology (treatment of blood conditions) if you:
 - › are taking any medications, including over-the-counter medications or a blood thinner (like ASA, warfarin, Xarelto® [rivaroxaban], Eliquis® [apixaban], fragmin, heparin).
 - › are allergic to any medications.
 - › are, or might be, pregnant.
- You may be given medication to help you relax, if needed. **If you are given medication to help you relax, you must have a responsible adult take you home after the test.**

How is the test done?

- If you are already admitted to the hospital, you may have the test done at your bedside in your hospital room.
- If you are an outpatient, you may have the test in a Day Unit or a clinic.
- A nurse will be with you during the test.

- The hematologist or NP will choose the area to take the bone marrow from. Often, this is the back part of your pelvic bone. Sometimes it may be your breast bone.



- You will be given medication to freeze the area through a needle. You may have a small, burning feeling where the needle goes in.
- Once the anesthetic has started working, the hematologist or NP will make a small incision (cut) in your skin. The incision is very small. It will not need stitches.

For bone marrow aspiration

- The hematologist or NP will put a short needle into your bone marrow. They will take a small amount of your bone marrow through this needle. You may feel some pressure when your bone marrow is taken.

You may also need a bone marrow biopsy.

- To do this, the hematologist or NP will put a longer needle into the same incision they used to take your bone marrow. You may feel some pressure when the sample is taken.
- After the test, you will be asked to lie on your back for about 15 to 30 minutes. This will put pressure on the incision to help prevent any bleeding or bruising. The incision will be covered with a sterile (germ-free) bandage.
- A nurse may check your vital signs (like your blood pressure and heart rate) and check the incision again for bleeding.

After the test

- Keep the bandage dry.
- You may take a shower within 24 to 48 hours (1 to 2 days) after your test.
- You may remove the bandage 24 to 48 hours after the test.
- **Do not** swim or take a bath until the incision has fully healed. This can take up to 2 weeks.
- Your incision may bruise and feel sore for a few days after your test. You may take acetaminophen (Tylenol[®]) for pain as told by your hematologist.
- Walking may help with pain from the test. You can also use an ice pack to help with pain and bruising.
- The nurse will tell you when you can go back to your usual activities.

Call your primary health care provider if you have:

- More tenderness or more pain at the incision
- Redness or swelling at the incision
- A fever (temperature above 38 °C or 100.4 °F)
- Bleeding or drainage (like pus) from the incision
 - › If you are bleeding, apply pressure to the incision for 15 minutes.
 - › **If bleeding does not stop, go to the nearest Emergency Department right away.**

If you cannot reach your primary health care provider and the symptoms do not go away, go to the nearest Emergency Department.

When will I get the results?

- Your hematologist or NP will arrange a follow-up appointment to talk with you about your results.
- It may take up to 3 to 4 weeks to get the results from your bone marrow test.

Notes:

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.