



Patient & Family Guide
2020

Bone Marrow Test



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Bone Marrow Test

Your doctor has arranged for you to have a bone marrow test.

Why is a bone marrow test done?

This test helps your doctor diagnose and treat your medical problem.

What is a bone marrow test?

- There is spongy tissue called bone marrow inside your bones. 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 remove a sample of liquid cells.
 - › **Bone marrow biopsy:** a very small slice of bone marrow is removed.
- The sample(s) 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?

- You may need someone to drive you home after the test if you are given medication to help you relax.
- Tell your doctor if you:
 - › are taking any medications (including a blood thinner).
 - › are allergic to any medications.
 - › are or might be pregnant.

Where is the test done?

Inpatients: It may be done at your bedside in the hospital.

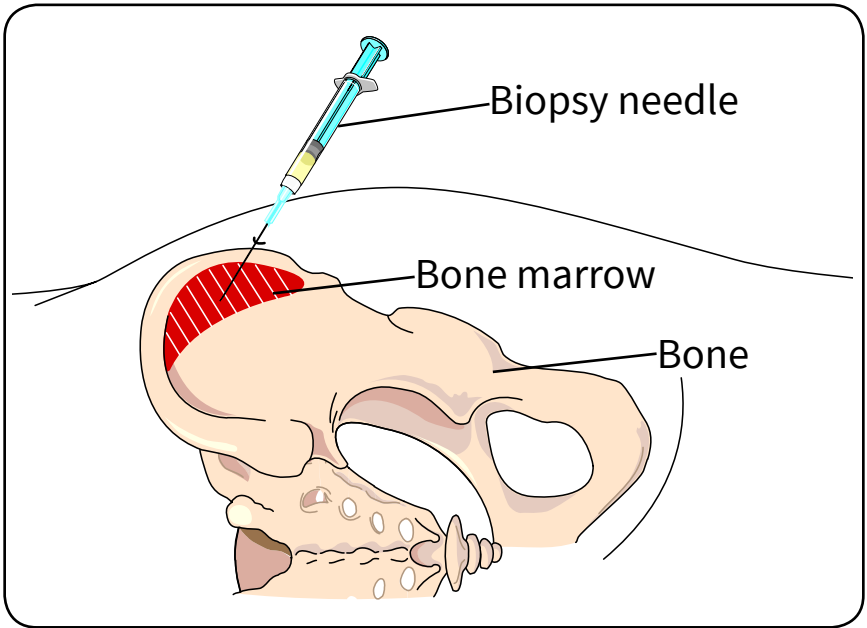
Outpatients: It may be done in a Day Unit or Clinic.

What are your questions?

Please ask. We are here to help you.

How is the test done?

- A nurse will be with you during the test.
- The doctor or nurse practitioner (NP) will choose the area to remove the bone marrow from. The test is usually done on the back part of your pelvic bone. Sometimes the breast bone is used.



- Medication will be injected using a needle to freeze the area. You may feel a slight burning sensation.
- After the freezing has started working, they will make a small incision (cut) in your skin. The incision is very small and does not need stitches.

- The doctor or NP will insert (put in) a short needle into the bone marrow. You may feel pressure when the bone marrow is taken into a syringe. This is known as bone marrow aspiration.
- Your doctor may also want a small bone sample. This is known as a bone marrow biopsy. The doctor or NP will insert a longer needle into the bone marrow through the same incision. 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 help to apply pressure to the biopsy site to prevent any bleeding or bruising.
- A nurse may check your vital signs (like blood pressure, heart rate, etc.) and check the biopsy site 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. **Do not swim or take a bath until the biopsy site has fully healed.** This can take up to 2 weeks.
- You may remove the bandage 24 to 48 hours after the test.

- The biopsy site may be slightly sore and/or bruised for a few days. You may take Tylenol®, as directed by your doctor. Walking may help with the discomfort from the test. Using an ice pack may help with bruising and discomfort.
- The nurse will tell you when you can go back to your usual activities.

Call your doctor or NP right away or go to the nearest Emergency Department if you have:

- › more tenderness, more pain, redness, or swelling at the biopsy site.
- › a fever.
- › bleeding or drainage (such as pus) from the biopsy site. If you are bleeding, apply pressure to the site for 15 minutes. **If bleeding does not stop, go to the nearest Emergency Department right away.**

When will I get the results?

- Your doctor or NP will arrange a followup 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.

