

Clinical Research Stem Cell Transplant Program



Stem Cell Transplants to Treat Blood Disorders

Blood diseases like leukemia, lymphoma, and bone marrow failure often require the transplant of hematopoietic stem cells into the affected patient. Resident in the bone marrow, these stem cells are capable of generating all the components of the blood.

The Tulane University School of Medicine Stem Cell Transplant Program has the capacity to transplant cells both from the patients themselves (harvested prior to treatment for another disease that would destroy the patient bone marrow) or from another donor (either related or unrelated to the patient).

Hana Safah is nationally recognized for her expertise and experience in transplant, especially for leukemia and lymphoma.

The Stem Cell Transplant Clinic

This clinic currently has in excess of 6000 active patients. These patients are drawn from all over Louisiana and the Gulf South, represented a genetically diverse population that is invaluable to drug and treatment trials. Established in 1994, it is the oldest program in the city of New Orleans.

The Center employs a collaborative and comprehensive model to the treatment of disease, drawing on the talents and expertise of a dedicated blood bank and consulting services of both Infectious Disease specialists and Doctors of Pharmacy.

In a cutting-edge practice, the clinicians here do not assume primary responsibility for their patients. Instead, they have developed a collaborative model where they work with the primary oncologist to assure continuity of care for each individual patient. Additionally, within the center the Leukemia division has extensive experience with acute and pediatric patients.

The Stem Cell Transplant... (cont.)

A noteworthy feature of the center is their ability to conduct in-house genetic and other analysis on the cancer type, allowing them to know the exact type of blood cancer within a few days (as opposed to a few weeks). This is essential if the patient is in blast crisis, a condition marked by an overload of cancerous cells within the blood, and needs to start a treatment specific to their cancer as soon as possible.

The Center at Tulane has Sarah Cannon Cancer Center designation, which is only assigned after meeting rigorous benchmarks and yearly audits. This designation allows access to a network of patient and trial data that facilitates the effective implementation of evidence-based medicine. This has made the Center an ideal venue for a number of clinical trials.

Clinical Research

Clinical research at the Center focuses on clinical trials (Phase II and III) for blood cancers and disorders, specifically multiple myeloma, acute myelogenous leukemia, and myelodysplastic syndrome. These trials focus both on frontline therapy and interventions for refractory disease, with patients that both have and have not gone through stem cell transplant.

Such clinical research activities are complemented by the basic research of **Nahkle Saba**, who focuses on B cell malignancies. The capacities of the clinic to treat patients, the experience of the clinical with drug trials, and the clinical and basic research areas of the Center make it a strong, vibrant program within the Tulane University School of Medicine.

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