

Many multiple sclerosis patients considering stem cell transplant

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(HealthDay)—Many multiple sclerosis (MS) patients are considering

autologous hematopoietic stem cell transplantation (aHSCT) as a treatment option, according to a study published in the January 2020 issue of *Multiple Sclerosis and Related Disorders*.

Floriaan G.C.M. De Kleermaeker, from the Viecuri Medical Center in Venlo, Netherlands, and colleagues conducted a survey of 137 patients with MS to assess disease history, knowledge about aHSCT, expectations of aHSCT, information sources, and the role they assign to their neurologists.

The researchers found that 54 percent of patients are considering aHSCT either now or in the future. Consideration was higher in those who are dissatisfied with current treatment, have a shorter disease duration (≤ 10 years), or are more disabled (Expanded Disability Status Scale > 3.5). Only one in four reported having sufficient knowledge about aHSCT. Although patients prefer receiving information from their [neurologist](#), patients mainly use potentially unreliable [information sources](#) (e.g., the internet and television). Half of patients think aHSCT is superior to highly effective disease-modifying therapy. Among patients interested in aHSCT, expectations of efficacy are significantly higher versus patients not wanting to undergo aHSCT. Only about one in three patients can cite at least one side effect.

"Neurologists should proactively inform their patients about the potential benefits and risks of aHSCT to enable them to choose the best [treatment option](#)," the authors write.

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