

KEY FACTS ABOUT

# GRAFT-VERSUS-HOST DISEASE (GVHD)

ALSO KNOWN AS:

• **GVHD** • **GvHD** • **GVH**

**GVHD IS:** Graft-versus-host disease (GVHD) is a common complication after an allogeneic transplant.<sup>1</sup> Whether or not a person gets GVHD depends on many things, including how well a transplant donor's cells match with the patient cells. GVHD can range from mild to severe.



## WHAT IS AN ALLOGENEIC BLOOD OR MARROW TRANSPLANT (BMT)?

In an allogeneic bone marrow transplant, your unhealthy blood-forming cells get replaced with healthy ones from a donor.



### Other Names for Transplant:

- Allo (allogeneic) transplant
- **BMT:** bone marrow transplant
- **HCT:** hematopoietic cell transplant
- **HSCT:** hematopoietic stem cell transplant
- **SCT:** stem cell transplant



**Donor:** A donor can be related or unrelated to the patient.



**Donor Cells:** The donor's cells can come from their blood stream their bone marrow, or umbilical cord blood.<sup>2</sup>



## WHY IS IT CALLED GRAFT-VERSUS-HOST DISEASE?



**Graft:** The donated stem cells from another person



**Host:** The patient with a blood cancer disorder receiving the stem cell transplant



VS



### The Graft Versus The Host Explained

Graft-versus-host disease (GVHD) happens when the donor's cells (graft) mount an immune response, a fight with the healthy cells in the transplant patient's body (host).<sup>3</sup>



## WHAT CAUSES GVHD?

A variety of reasons may contribute to the rare condition of GVHD, main causes are related to:



Traits of the donor stem cells (graft)



Age



The stem cell source peripheral blood, bone marrow or umbilical cord are sources of donated stem cells<sup>1</sup>



## TYPES OF GVHD<sup>1</sup>

There are two types of GVHD



### SYMPTOMS OF GVHD<sup>1</sup>

#### Acute GvHD (aGVHD)

- Skin
- GI Tract
- Liver

#### Chronic GVHD (cGVHD)

- Skin and Nails
- Mouth
- Eyes
- GI tract
- Genitals
- Joints and Fascia
- Liver
- Lungs



## HOW IS GVHD DIAGNOSED?

Some tests a healthcare professional may use to in to diagnoses GVHD could be

- Physical Examination
- Blood and Other Laboratory Tests
- Biopsies
- Scans and Imaging



### Early Detection

Self-monitoring and awareness to identify GVHD symptoms and changes in symptoms as early as possible is important in diagnosis of GVHD.

- GVHD symptom checklists
- Symptoms tracking applications on electronic or mobile devices
- Emotional wellness self checks and journaling any challenges

**Rally for patients with GVHD by sharing your message of hope on social media**



**#GVHDday**



**#GVHDconnect4hope**

The GVHD Alliance is empowering voices in the GVHD community to help improve the lives of people living with GVHD.

To learn more, visit  [www.gvhdalliance.org](http://www.gvhdalliance.org)



**The health information contained herein is provided for general educational purposes only. Your healthcare professional is the best source of information regarding your health.**

#### References:

1. Justiz Vaillant AA, Modi P, Mohammadi O. Graft Versus Host Disease. In: *StatPearls*. Treasure Island (FL): StatPearls Publishing; July 8, 2022.
2. Transplant activity report. Blood Stem Cell. <https://bloodstemcell.hrsa.gov/data/donation-and-transplantation-statistics/transplant-activity-report>. Accessed September 29, 2022.
3. Khaddour K, Hana CK, Mewawalla P. Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation. In: *StatPearls*. Treasure Island (FL): StatPearls Publishing; June 27, 2022.

#### Additional supplemental sources:

The Future of Chronic Graft-Versus-Host Disease: Introduction to the 2020 National Institutes of Health Consensus Development Project Reports. Pavletic, S; Martin, P; Schultz, K; Lee, S; Transplant Cell Ther. 2021; K: <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JTCT.2021.02.034>  
Bachier CR, Aggarwal SK, Hennegan K, et al. Epidemiology and treatment of chronic graft-versus-host disease post-allogeneic hematopoietic cell transplantation (HCT): a US claims analysis. Transplant Cell Ther. 2021;27:499.e1499.e6.