

Diagnosing Myeloma

A Quick Guide

Contents

This is a brief summary on 'Diagnosing myeloma' from our website. You will find more detailed information on there. In this information there are sections on

- Tests for myeloma
- Further tests for myeloma
- Questions for your doctor

You can view this information in a larger print on our website.

Tests for myeloma

You will usually see your GP first, who will examine you and ask you about your general health and medical history. Your doctor will ask about your symptoms, and may carry out a physical examination to look for things such as bruising, bleeding or signs of infection. They may ask you to have blood and urine tests.

At the hospital

If your doctor suspects that you may have multiple myeloma, they will arrange for you to see a blood disorders specialist (a haematologist) at your local hospital. At the hospital, the haematologist will ask about your medical history and symptoms. They will examine you and arrange some more tests. You may have blood tests, a urine test, a bone marrow test and X-rays.

Further tests for myeloma

If your earlier tests show you have myeloma, you will need to have further tests to see how the myeloma is affecting your bone marrow and bones and other parts of your body. This information helps your specialist to know how much the myeloma has developed (the stage) and decide on the best treatment. These further tests may include a CT scan, an MRI scan and possibly a PET-CT scan.

After the tests

Your doctor will ask you to go back to the hospital when your test results have come through. But this may take a little time, probably about a week or two. This is a very anxious time for most people.

While you are waiting for the results, it may help to talk to a close friend or relative about how you feel. Or you may want to contact a cancer support group to talk to someone who has been through a similar experience. You can also find online support forums, such as CancerChat (<http://cancerchat.cancerresearchuk.org/>)

What to ask your doctor about myeloma tests

- What tests are you going to do?
- Why do I have to have these tests?
- What will these tests show?
- Are any of these tests painful?
- Are there any risks with any of these tests?
- Can I eat normally before these tests?
- What are the side effects of these tests?
- Do I have to stay in hospital for any of these tests?
- Can I bring someone with me when I have these tests?
- How long will it take to get the results of the tests?
- Who will give me the test results?
- How will I get the results?

For more information, visit our website <http://www.cruk.org/about-cancer>

You will find a wide range of detailed, up to date information for people affected by cancer, including a clinical trials database that you can search for trials in the UK. Our information is based on the best current scientific evidence and reviewed regularly by leading clinicians and experts in health and social care.

For answers to your questions about cancer call our Cancer Information Nurses on 0808 800 4040 9am till 5pm Monday to Friday.

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