

What to Expect After the Transplant

After an ASCT, your body needs time to heal and rebuild its immune system. This can take several weeks to months. You may feel very tired at first, and it's common to have a weak immune system, which makes it easier to catch infections. Taking care of yourself during this time is important for a strong recovery.

Daily Care Tips After ASCT

- **Rest Often:** Fatigue is common. Listen to your body and rest when needed.
- **Eat Well:** Focus on healthy foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. You may need soft or bland foods at first.
- **Drink Fluids:** Stay well hydrated to help your body flush out toxins and heal faster.
- **Practice Good Hygiene:**
 - Wash your hands often.
 - Avoid people who are sick.
 - Keep cuts clean and covered.
- **Protect Your Immune System:**
 - Avoid raw or undercooked foods.
 - Stay away from crowded places if your doctor advises.
 - Ask your doctor about vaccines once your immune system is stronger.
- **Manage Side Effects:**
 - Use medications as prescribed for nausea, pain, or infections.
 - Tell your care team about any new symptoms or concerns.

Maintenance Therapy

For people with multiple myeloma, maintenance therapy is often used after ASCT to help keep the cancer from returning. It usually involves taking a low-dose medication every day or a few days a week for an extended period of time.

Common maintenance drugs include:

- Lenalidomide (Revlimid) – an immune-modulating drug
- Bortezomib (Velcade) – used for high-risk cases
- Other targeted medications depending on your condition

Maintenance therapy can:

- Help extend remission
- Reduce the chance of relapse
- Be adjusted based on side effects or lab results

Monitoring and Follow-Up

After your transplant:

- You will have regular checkups and lab tests to watch for signs of infection, organ problems, or return of disease.
- You may need bone marrow tests or imaging from time to time.
- Keep track of any side effects from maintenance therapy and tell your doctor.

When to Call the Doctor

Call your doctor if you have:

- A fever (100.4°F / 38°C or higher)
- Chills, sore throat, or new cough
- Trouble breathing
- Bleeding or bruising easily
- Severe tiredness that gets worse
- Confusion, chest pain, or dizziness

