Pre-Stem Cell Transplant Tests

Below you will find a brief description of each test and a space to write down when the test is to be done. These tests help us to know if your body is ready for transplant. They also help us to compare any changes that may occur after the transplant. You may need all or some of these tests. Please talk to your doctor or nurse about any questions or concerns you may have.

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<td><strong>Bone Marrow Aspiration and Biopsy</strong>&lt;br&gt;A small sample of bone (usually the hip bone) and bone marrow, which is liquid, is removed using a needle. You will need to lie on your stomach during the test. The doctor will clean your skin and then numb the skin and the top of the bone. You may be given some medicine to help you relax. You will need to lie flat on your back for 15-30 minutes after the test. Refer to HFFY#4458, Bone Marrow Procedure Guide. A bone marrow biopsy is done in a procedure room in the Clinic area.</td>
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<td><strong>Laboratory Tests</strong>&lt;br&gt;Many blood samples are needed to tell what viruses you have been exposed to. One common virus most everyone has been exposed to is chicken pox. You will also need a blood test for HIV which is the virus that can cause AIDS. The blood can be drawn from a central catheter if you have one. Otherwise an IV can be placed and then used throughout the day for other tests. All blood tests are drawn in the Outpatient Lab. Also, you will need to give a urine sample. We may need to do a pregnancy test too.</td>
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<td><strong>Computerized Axial Tomography (CAT Scan)</strong>&lt;br&gt;Special X-rays are taken of the inside of your body and are done in Radiology. You will not eat or drink for about 4 hours before the test. Once you check in you will drink a contrast dye. You will receive contrast dye through an IV. The dye helps to locate tumors or other areas of concern. You will need to lie still on a table while a machine circles around your head and body taking X-rays. This test is about an hour long. Once done with the test, you may have “loose bowels” for a day. This will go away. You should drink fluids such as juice or water, about two quarts for the next two days, to flush the dye from your body. Refer to HFFY#4351, CT Scan.</td>
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Echocardiogram (ECHO)
Sound waves are used to take pictures of your heart. A cool, jelly-like substance is spread on your chest. Then a paddle is moved across your chest to make a picture on the screen. The test takes about thirty minutes and is done in the Cardiology area on the 4th floor.

Lumbar Puncture (LP)
A thin needle is placed between the bones of the spine really low in the back near the sacral area. Fluid surrounds the spinal cord and brain. This fluid is called cerebral spinal fluid (CSF). Sometimes cancer cells can get into the fluid so some is taken to make sure no bad cells are there. Often a few drops of fluid are taken and sent to the lab for study. Chemotherapy is given into the fluid to kill any cancer cells if any are found. Usually this takes about 2-3 minutes and will be done in the procedure room in the Clinic. You will have to lie flat for about one hour afterwards.

Panorex Film
An X-ray of your jaw, teeth, and gums lets the transplant dentist know if there are any areas of infection or decay. If you have any of these problems, they will need to be fixed before the transplant. This X-ray lasts about 10 minutes and is done in the Radiology area.

Pulmonary Function Tests
A respiratory technologist will measure the volume of air you inhale and exhale while you sit in a plastic booth. These tests will tell how well your lungs work. If you smoke, your lungs will not work as well as they should. You will have to stop smoking before the transplant. You will have some blood drawn from an artery. This blood sample is also a measure of how well your lungs work. If you are on Coumadin®/Warfarin or have a low platelet count, it is possible that you should not have the arterial bloods drawn.

Social Work
Most patients meet with a BMT social worker before transplant to discuss practical, financial and emotional needs. Social workers are available to assist with or make a referral in regard to disability, financial needs, and advance planning.