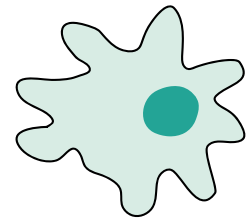


What is BPDCN?

Blastic plasmacytoid dendritic cell neoplasm (BPDCN) is a very rare, fast-growing type of cancer. It develops from immature blood cells called plasmacytoid dendritic cells. If you have BPDCN, these cells grow out of control and can build up in your skin, your bone marrow and other parts of your body.



Plasmacytoid dendritic cell

We do not know exactly what causes BPDCN. But it is not because of anything you have done. You cannot catch BPDCN or pass it on to anyone else.

- BPDCN usually affects people over 60 to 65, but it can develop at any age. If it happens in children, it is usually less aggressive.
- It is much more common in men than in women.
- It can affect people of any ethnic background.

In most people, BPDCN appears first in the skin. But it can also affect your bone marrow, spleen, lymph nodes or other parts of your body. Symptoms vary depending on where it is. They can be quite vague at first, which is why it can take a while to get a diagnosis.



How is BPDCN treated?

BPDCN can be difficult to treat. There is no standard approach and different doctors might use different options. Some of these are routinely available on the NHS but some are not.

Your team will suggest the most suitable option for you based on your individual circumstances. They should explain how you have it and what you can expect from treatment. If the treatment is not routinely available on the NHS, they should explain your funding options.

Your team might recommend:

- Chemotherapy
- Treatment as part of a clinical trial, if there is one suitable for you
- Tagraxofusp, a medicine designed to target BPDCN cells directly, if you are able to access it
- A treatment usually used for other blood cancers
- Medicines to prevent or treat symptoms or side effects



If you respond well and go into remission, your team might suggest a **stem cell transplant** using cells from a donor. This reduces the risk of BPDCN coming back. It is an intensive form of treatment and it is not suitable for everyone.

If BPDCN does come back after treatment, your medical team will talk to you about your options.

Outcomes of BPDCN vary from person to person. Your medical team are best placed to discuss what they expect for you. Remember that figures you may find online are averages based on very small numbers of people. These people may not have been able to access the same treatments as you.

Being diagnosed with BPDCN can be overwhelming. Don't be afraid to ask for help from family, friends, your medical team or Leukaemia Care.

For [more information about BPDCN](#), follow the link, search 'BPDCN' at www.leukaemiacare.org.uk or scan the QR code.



[We're here for you if you need support.](#) Scan the QR code, click the link or search 'support for you' at leukaemiacare.org.uk to find out what we offer.



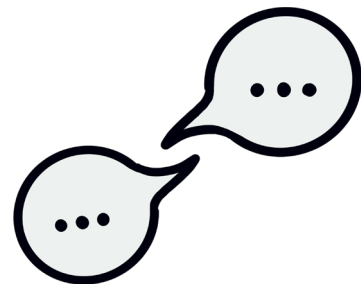
Want to talk?

Call our freephone helpline on **08088 010 444**
(free from landlines and all major mobile networks)

Message us on WhatsApp at **07500 068065**

www.leukaemiacare.org.uk

support@leukaemiacare.org.uk



If you have any feedback, or you'd like a list of the references we used to create this factsheet, please email information@leukaemiacare.org.uk, complete our [short survey](#) or call **01905 755977**.



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