

Myelodysplastic/myeloproliferative neoplasms (MDS/MPNs)

Myelodysplastic/myeloproliferative neoplasms (MDS/MPNs) are very rare types of blood cancer. They are also called MDS/MPN overlap syndromes or MDS/MPN crossovers.

They happen when cells in your bone marrow grow out of control and make:

- Too many of some types of blood cells
- Not enough of other types of blood cells
- Some abnormal blood cells that do not work properly

MDS/MPNs usually affect people over 65. They are slightly more common in men than women.

We do not know the exact cause of MDS/MPNs. It is not because of anything you have or have not done.

There are different types of MDS/MPN. They can affect different blood cells and cause different symptoms. These might include:



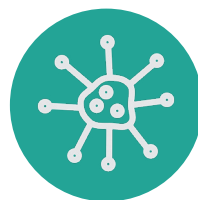
Feeling exhausted



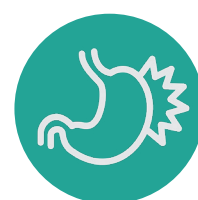
Feeling breathless and dizzy



Bruising and bleeding easily



Frequent or long lasting infections



Tummy pain or bloating



Feeling full quickly when you eat



Fever for no obvious reason



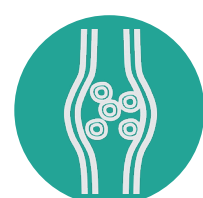
Losing weight without trying to



Skin problems



Bone pain



Blood clots

MDS/MPNs are diagnosed using blood tests and bone marrow tests.

The most common type of MDS/MPN is chronic myelomonocytic leukaemia (CMML). We have separate information on this. This factsheet is about rarer types.

Treatment for MDS/MPNs

Treatment usually aims to control your condition and manage your symptoms. Your doctor will recommend the most suitable option for you. It might include:

- Treatment as part of a clinical trial, if there is one suitable for you.
- Medicine to lower your blood cell counts, if they are high. This is usually a chemotherapy tablet called hydroxycarbamide.
- Blood transfusions or injections to treat low red blood cell counts.
- Blood-thinning medicines like low-dose aspirin to prevent blood clots.
- A stem cell transplant. This is a very intensive treatment and is only suitable if you are young and fit enough to have it.
- Treatment and support to help you feel better and improve your quality of life.



Sometimes, MDS/MPNs can develop into a faster-growing blood cancer. If this happens, you will need different treatment. Outcomes for MDS/MPNs vary from person to person. Your consultant is the best person to advise you on what they expect for you.

This information is aimed at people in the UK. We do our best to make sure it is accurate and up to date but it should not replace advice or guidance from your health professional.

For more [information about MDS/MPNs](#) follow the link or scan the QR code. Or visit www.leukaemiacare.org.uk. This also includes links to order free information in print.



Need help? We offer a range of [support services](#). To find out more, scan the QR code, click the link or search 'support for you' at leukaemiacare.org.uk



Want to talk about MDS/MPN?

- Call our freephone helpline on **08088 010 444** (weekdays 9am to 4.30pm)
- Send a WhatsApp to **07500 068065** (weekdays 9am to 5pm)
- Visit www.leukaemiacare.org.uk
- Email support@leukaemiacare.org.uk

If you have any feedback or you'd like a list of the sources we used for this factsheet, please get in touch. Email information@leukaemiacare.org.uk or call **08088 010 444**. Or complete our [short survey](#) to let us know what we can improve.



Version: 1 Reviewed: 12/2025 Next review: 12/2028

Leukaemia Care is registered as a charity in England and Wales (no. 1183890) and Scotland (no. SC049802). Company number: 11911752 (England and Wales). Registered office address: One Birch Court, Blackpole East, Worcester, WR3 8SG