

MAY 2021

CONSENSUS STATEMENT

COVID-19 VACCINATION

FOR PATIENTS WITH HAEMATOLOGICAL
CANCERS

CHAPTER OF HAEMATOLOGISTS
COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS, SINGAPORE



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GUIDELINES**1. Patients with haematological cancers**

- 1.1 Patients with haematological cancers were not included in any of the initial COVID-19 vaccine trials. As such, prospective data on vaccine safety and efficacy in this group of patients at present is limited. Recommendations in this consensus statement will be modified accordingly as more data emerges.
- 1.2 Patients with active cancer who are not on treatment with chemotherapy, radiotherapy or immunotherapy CAN be vaccinated. Active cancer not on treatment is defined as: a) Not on any treatment in the past 3 months AND b) No planned treatment in the next 2 months (Reference MOH Circular No. 29A/2021).

2. Patients with acute leukaemia or myelodysplastic syndrome on treatment**2.1 Acute myeloid leukaemia**

- 2.1.1 Patients receiving intensive induction and/or consolidation chemotherapy should defer COVID-19 vaccination until further clinical data is available
- 2.1.2 Patients on low intensity maintenance therapy with single-agent hypomethylating agents can be considered for COVID-19 vaccination after discussion with their haematologist

2.2 Acute lymphoblastic leukaemia

- 2.2.1 Patients receiving intensive induction, consolidation or maintenance chemotherapy should defer COVID-19 vaccination until further clinical data is available
- 2.2.2 Patients on tyrosine kinase inhibitors and prednisolone less than 20 mg daily for 14 days or equivalent can be considered for COVID-19 vaccination after discussion with their haematologist

2.3 Myelodysplastic syndrome

- 2.3.1 Patients receiving intensive chemotherapy should defer COVID-19 vaccination until further clinical data is available
- 2.3.2 Patients on low intensity therapy with single-agent hypomethylating agents or lenalidomide can be considered for COVID-19 vaccination after discussion with their haematologist (see footnote)

3. Patients with aplastic anaemia or bone marrow failure syndromes on treatment

- 3.1 Patients who received ATG/Cyclosporin within 6 months should defer COVID-19 vaccination until further clinical data is available

4. Patients with myeloproliferative disorders or chronic myeloid leukaemia on treatment

- 4.1 Patients on hydroxyurea can receive COVID-19 vaccine

- 4.2 Chronic myeloid leukaemia patients on tyrosine kinase inhibitors can receive COVID-19 vaccine
- 4.3 Patients on JAK-2 inhibitors or interferon can be considered for COVID-19 vaccination after discussion with their haematologist (see footnote)
- 5. Patients with lymphoproliferative disorders on treatment**
 - 5.1 Patients who are on active therapy including chemotherapy, immunotherapy or targeted therapy should defer COVID-19 vaccination until further clinical data is available
- 6. Patients with myeloma, amyloidosis or other plasma cell dyscrasias on treatment**
 - 6.1 Patients on active therapy including chemotherapy or immunotherapy should defer COVID-19 vaccination until further clinical data is available
 - 6.2 Patients receiving maintenance lenalidomide or bortezomib can be considered for COVID-19 vaccination after discussion with their haematologist (see footnote)
- 7. Family members and close contacts of patients with haematological cancers**
 - 7.1 Household members, close contacts and health care providers caring for patients with haematological cancers are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated
 - 7.2 Vaccinated household members, caregivers, and medical staff should continue to wear masks, practice social distancing, and follow all recommendations for preventing SARS-CoV-2 acquisition and transmission

If patients experience an allergic reaction (fever, warmth, redness, itchy skin rash, shortness of breath, or swelling of the face or tongue), they should contact their physician or go to the nearest hospital emergency department immediately as it can be life-threatening.

RESOURCES

1. ASH-ASTCT COVID-19 and Vaccines: Frequently Asked Questions. Available from: <https://www.hematology.org/covid-19/ash-astct-covid-19-and-vaccines>.
2. ESMO statements for vaccination against COVID-19 in patients with cancer. Available from: <https://www.esmo.org/covid-19-and-cancer/covid-19-vaccination>
3. COVID-19 Vaccine in patients with haematological disorders British Society for Haematology. Available from: <https://b-s-h.org.uk/about-us/news/covid-19-updates/>
4. Recommendation for COVID-19 vaccination in patients with hematological cancer. Available from: <https://ehaweb.org/covid-19/eha-statement-on-covid-19-vaccines/recommendation-for-covid-19-vaccination-in-patients-with-hematological-cancer/>.

FOOTNOTE

1. Patients on interferon or lenalidomide may experience increased vaccine side effects due to the immunomodulatory nature of these drugs
2. If dexamethasone is part of maintenance treatment, it should be held during vaccination.

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