New CAR-T for Multiple Myeloma

Half of those treated with the experimental immunotherapy bb2121 no longer had detectable cancer.

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A new engineered T-cell therapy has potent activity against multiple myeloma, according to a small Phase I study.

Chimeric antigen receptor T-cell therapy—better known as CAR-T—involves removing a sample of a patient's white blood cells, reprogramming the T cells to kill cancer and infusing them back into the body. The new therapy, known as bb2121, inserts an artificial receptor that targets the B-cell maturation antigen, which is often expressed on plasma cells that grow out of control in people with multiple myeloma.

Among the 22 participants with relapsed or refractory (nonresponsive) multiple myeloma who were treated with high doses of bb2121, the overall response rate was 96 percent, including 50 percent with complete responses. The median progression-free survival time was 11.8 months for patients with the longest follow-up.

A larger Phase II trial of bb2121 called KarMMa is now recruiting participants.
