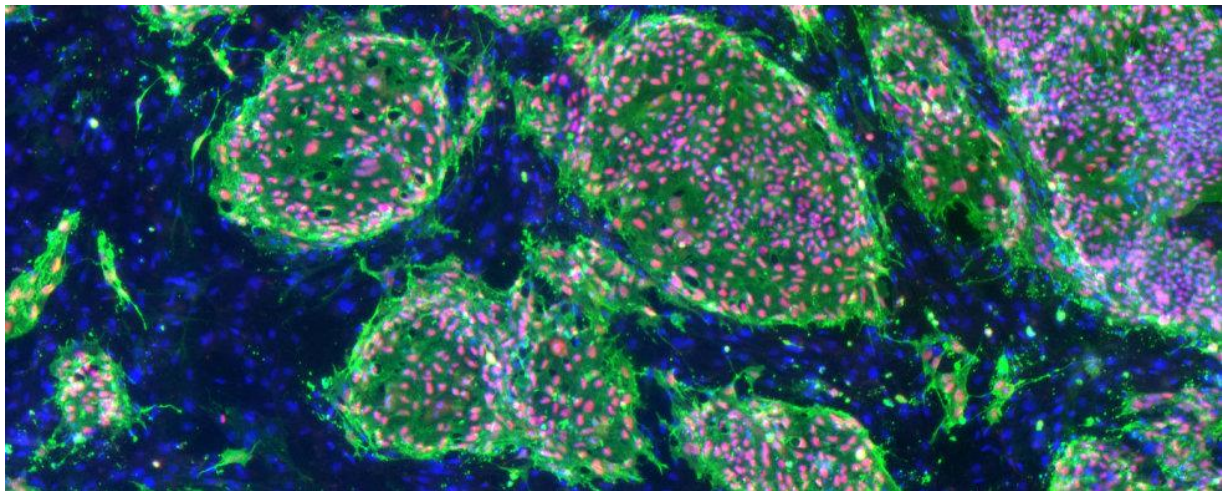


Stem cell transplants may induce long-term remission of multiple sclerosis

Encouraging results help set stage for larger studies.

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New clinical trial results provide evidence that high-dose immunosuppressive therapy followed by transplantation of a person's own blood-forming stem cells can induce sustained remission of relapsing-remitting multiple sclerosis (MS), an autoimmune disease in which the immune system attacks the central nervous system.



Five years after receiving the treatment, called high-dose immunosuppressive therapy and autologous hematopoietic cell transplant (HDIT/HCT), 69 percent of trial participants had survived without experiencing progression of disability, relapse of MS symptoms or new brain lesions. Notably, participants did not take any MS medications after receiving HDIT/HCT. Other studies have indicated that currently available MS drugs have lower success rates.

The trial, called HALT-MS, was sponsored by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the National Institutes of Health, and conducted by the NIAID-funded [Immune Tolerance Network](#) (link is external) (ITN). The researchers published [three-year results](#) from the study in December 2014, and the final five-year results appear online Feb. 1 in *Neurology*, the medical journal of the American Academy of Neurology.