Clinical impact of clonal hematopoiesis in hematopoietic cell transplantation: a review, meta-analysis, and call to action

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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Methods

Search Strategy

We systemically searched for articles indexed in PubMed, Scopus, Embase (Elsevier), and Web of Science (Clarivate). The general search terms used to search for the articles were ("clonal hematopoiesis" OR "clonal haematopoiesis" OR "clonal hematopoiesis of indeterminate potential" OR "age-related clonal hematopoiesis" OR "age-related clonal hematopoiesis" OR "CHIP" OR "ARCH") AND ("stem cell transplantation" OR "hematopoietic stem cell transplantation" OR "haematopoietic stem cell transplantation" OR "bone marrow transplant*" OR "stem cell transplant*" OR "hematopoietic stem cell transplant*" OR "haematopoietic stem cell transplant*" OR "hematopoietic cell transplant*" OR "haematopoietic cell transplant*"). For Scopus, Embase, and Web of Science, a language filter was used to specify documents written in English, and a document type filter was used to specify articles or articles in press. For PubMed, language (English) and species (human) filters were applied.

Our search strategy within the four selected databases yielded 1,245 articles (280 from PubMed, 456 from Scopus, 248 from Embase, and 261 from the Web of Science. EndNote 20 (Clarivate Analytics LLC, USA) was used to remove any duplicates and select eligible studies from the database findings and other sources. After removal of 491 duplicate articles, we performed title and abstract screening for 754 articles.

Search Results

The process of selection of the final studies included is outlined using a PRISMA flow diagram (**Figure 1**). Out of the articles screened, 32 articles were included in this review. Among the 699 excluded articles, 179 (26%) were non-human studies, 158 (23%) were reviews, 121 (17%) were not CH papers, 88 (13%) were neither CH nor HCT papers, 72 (10%) were not HCT papers, 57 (8%) were case reports or series, 13 (2%) were letters with no new data, 5 (1%) were clinical guides, 4 (1%) were conference

proceedings, and 2 (0.3%) were commentaries. The 32 included studies are summarized in **Table S1**; the CH-related results are summarized in **Table S2**.

Results

Auto-HCT

Clonal Expansion and Evolution

In this article, we define clonal expansion as an increase in the VAF of pre-existing CH mutations; clonal evolution is acquisition of new CH mutations. Both scenarios represent progression of CH and, theoretically, increased CH-related risk.

Evidence largely suggests that CH mutations increase in number and VAF after auto-HCT, but longer-term may become stable. In mantle cell lymphoma patients, 98% (53/54) of post-treatment CH mutations were present before starting chemotherapy.⁴² The median VAF of CH mutations increased after induction and after HCT (1.5% to 2.8%, p=0.001), but stabilized to an age-related rate during follow-up (growth rate 5.1% per year). A small cohort study found that, from the time of auto-HCT to tMN, VAFs of *DNMT3A* clones did not increase significantly (0.8% to 2.1%, p=0.63), whereas non-*DNMT3A* clones did (1% to 37%, p=0.002).³⁹ Most CH mutations (86%) were at VAFs < 2% before auto-HCT. A study in patients with post-HCT CH (n=18) showed that there was a mean 6.3-fold increase in VAF from auto-HCT to first follow-up.²³ Of the 28 CH mutations detected after auto-HCT, 9 (32%) had a VAF ≥ 2% and 7 (25%) had a VAF between 0.5% and 2% before auto-HCT. Evidence of clonal evolution was found with 12 CH mutations detected after but not before auto-HCT, which either arose from HCT or were below the level of detection (i.e., VAF < 0.5%).²³ As with other studies, longer-term, mutations became stable over time.

Relapse: Lymphoid Malignancies

No studies (0/3) reported an association between CH status and relapse after auto-HCT. In lymphoma, CH was not associated with time to relapse or PFS.²⁴ In MM, cumulative incidence of relapse (CIR) did not significantly differ between patients with versus without CH (73.9% vs 64.9%, p=0.67).³⁶ Although the incidence of NRM was higher in patients with CH (4.3% vs 1.2% if no CH), this difference did not meet statistical significance (p=0.08).

Relapse and Survival: Myeloid Malignancies

One retrospective study in patients with AML who received auto-HCT investigated persistence of *DNMT3A, TET2*, and *ASXL1* (DTA) mutations.¹⁶ Patients were considered to have CH if DTA mutations persisted despite complete remission (CR) and clearance of other pathogenic variants; if the DTA mutation was not detected at CR it was classified as a leukemia mutation. With these classifications, there was no association between CH status after auto-HCT and OS (HR 0.79, 95% CI 0.41-1.51, p=0.44) or PFS (HR 0.75, 95% CI 0.42-1.33, p=0.287). Relapse rate was also similar between patients with and without CH-like mutations (51.6% vs 41.7%, respectively, p=0.04).¹⁶ Caution should be noted before weighing these findings as evidence of the impact of CH in HCT, since it is unclear whether persistence of DTA mutations at CR in AML patients is truly CH versus measurable residual disease.

Other Adverse Events: Lymphoid Malignancies

Several less frequently investigated outcomes were reported. In lymphoma, pre-HCT DRP mutations (not CH in general) were associated with more inpatient days during years 2 to 5 after auto-HCT (median 20 vs. 2 days; p=0.0025) and intensive care unit admissions.³⁴ Other adverse events investigated in lymphoma that did not meet statistical significance were risk for severe infections, cardiovascular events, and transfusions.³⁴ However, in patients with MM, pre-HCT CH was associated with risk for cardiovascular events (including heart failure, coronary artery disease, and stroke)^{37, 65} and recurrent bacterial infections.³⁷ In another study of MM patients, although CH was not associated with overall risk for venous thromboembolism, there was evidence that incidence > 3 months after discontinuing lenalidomide was higher in patients with CH than those without CH.³⁶

Allo-HCT

CH Engraftment: Heterogenous Groups

Data consistently show that donor CH successfully engrafts in recipients via HCT regardless of donor type. In a study of MRD HCTs, all donor CH mutations engrafted in the recipients except for one *SF3B1* mutation.⁴⁷ This was in line with another study in that detected all (7/7) matched sibling donor (MSD) CH mutations in recipients at day 56 or 90 post-HCT⁵³ and a third study that detected 84.3% (86/102) of donor CH mutations in recipients 12 months after allo-HCT.⁴⁴ When looking at *DNMT3A*-CH specifically, all *R882* mutations engrafted (10/10, 100% vs. 46/54, 85.2% for non-*R882*) and the VAF was significantly higher in recipients than non-*R882* mutations (**Table S2**).⁴⁴ Additional evidence of CH engraftment was presented in a study of young MUDs, where 19 CH mutations were identified in 44% (11/25) of donors, all of which engrafted in recipients.⁴³ A study that assessed long-term engraftment of CH mutations identified donor-engrafted CH in 50% (5/10) of donor CH cases.⁴⁸

Clonal Expansion and Evolution: Myeloid Malignancies, Young Unrelated Donors

Two studies investigated rates of clonal expansion and evolution in HCTs with young MUDs but had differing methods and results. In one study (median donor age 26 years, range 20-58), most (74%) of the CH mutations persisted a year after allo-HCT, despite low VAFs (median 0.25%) in donors.⁴³ Of engrafted mutations, 3 (16%) expanded in recipients beyond VAF ≥2% at days 100 and 365. Moreover, within the first 100 days after allo-HCT, the mutational burden in recipients increased from 19 to 33 CH mutations (p=0.048). Some of these new mutations were present in MUDs at low levels (< 0.1%) and others were *de novo* mutations that arose after HCT. The second study included elderly individuals (n=22) at a median follow-up of 9.8 years after allo-HCT from young MUDs (<41 years old), and found a single *BCORL1* CH mutation in a recipient; however, the mutation was not detected in the donor or recipient pre-HCT at a VAF ≥0.05%.46

Clonal Expansion and Evolution: Heterogenous Groups

Other studies provide additional insight into the relationship between CH expansion and evolution with outcomes. In MRDs, engrafted CH mutations expanded after HCT and decreases in VAF paralleled decreases in donor chimerism and relapse.⁴⁷ Similarly in MSDs, donor CH mutations expanded most rapidly until day +56 then stabilized.⁵³ Furthermore, CH mutations expanded more rapidly than germline mutations, and non-donor-derived pathogenic mutations expanded most rapidly. In long-term allo-HCT survivors, CH mutations expanded more rapidly in recipients than MRDs (p=0.03).⁴⁸ Genespecific differences in clonal expansion have also been reported (**Table S2**) and a study found that patients with the largest expansion of *DNMT3A*-CH died from HCT-related complications within a year.⁵¹

CH Persistence: Myeloid Malignancies

Multiple studies investigated the persistence of CH-related mutations throughout treatment, including HCT, for myeloid malignancies. In a study of AML patients who achieved CR after induction, post-CR CH persisted in 91% (39/43) of patients during and after post-CR treatment; however, 95% $(20/21)$ of the patients who received allo-HCT had clearance of the post-CR CH.⁵⁵ In another study of AML patients who received allo-HCT, persistence of CH-related mutations from diagnosis to CR only occurred in 28% (21/75) of patients and did not affect 4-year cumulative instance of relapse or OS; post-HCT persistence of these mutations was not studied.⁵⁰

Peripheral Blood Stem Cell Mobilization: Related Donors

One study reported results on differences in PBSC mobilization by CH status and found that in MRDs, CH status was not associated with the amount of harvested CD34⁺ cells.⁴⁷

Engraftment: Leukocytes, Neutrophils, Platelets, and Donor Cells

In MRD HCTs, the cumulative incidence of leukocyte engraftment at 15 days was higher in patients with CH+ donors.⁴⁷ Three studies found no difference in time to neutrophil or platelet

engraftment by donor CH status^{45, 51, 52} and one study reported no difference in time to full donor chimerism by donor CH status.⁵¹

Other Adverse Events

Additional adverse outcomes reported in the allo-HCT studies include atrial fibrillation inhospital, prolonged neutropenia, second primary malignancies, and telomere shortening. Although incidence of atrial fibrillation in-hospital was not statistically different between patients with and without pre-HCT DTA CH mutations, incidence was notably higher in patients with *DNMT3A*-CH (53% vs. 27% if no *DNMT3A*-CH).⁶⁶ Prolongation of neutropenia was associated with *TET2*-CH in AML HCT recipients.⁵⁵ Incidence of second malignancies (median follow-up: 13 years) was 6% and 14.8% in HCT recipients with CH+ and CH- donors, respectively; however, the two cases of second malignancy in recipients with CH+ donors were non-melanoma skin cancers.⁴³ Finally, one study investigated telomere shortening, a measure of aging, between donors and recipients of allo-HCT and found that the difference was equivalent to approximately 20 years of proliferative life history in the hematopoietic system of recipients; however, telomere shortening was not different between individuals with and without CH.⁴⁸

Table S1. Summary of original studies investigating the association between clonal hematopoiesis (CH) and outcomes in hematopoietic cell transplantation

(HCT).

^aClonal expansion is defined here as an increase in the VAF of pre-existing CH mutations; clonal evolution is acquisition of new CH mutations.

AdjHR, adjusted hazard ratio; **AFiH**, atrial fibrillation in-hospital; **Allo**, allogeneic; **AML**, acute myeloid leukemia; **CC**, case-control; **CH**, clonal hematopoiesis; **95% CI**, 95% confidence interval; **CIR**, cumulative incidence of relapse; **CIR/P**, cumulative incidence of relapse or progression; **CR**, complete response; **CRFS**, cGVHD relapse-free survival; **CS**, cross-sectional; **d**, days; **DCL**, donor cell leukemia; **DFS**, disease-free survival; **EFS**, event-free survival; **GRFS**, GVHD-free relapse-free survival; **GVHD**, graft-versus-host disease; **HCT**, hematopoietic cell transplantation; **HR**, hazards ratio; **ICU**, intensive care unit; **IMiD**, immunomodulatory imide drugs; **m**, months; **MDS**, myelodysplastic syndromes; **MM**, multiple myeloma; **NA**, not applicable/available; **NCC**, nested case-control; **NRM**, non-relapse mortality; **OS**, overall survival; **OR**, odds ratio; **PBSC**, peripheral blood stem cells; **PC**, prospective cohort; **PFS**, progression-free survival; **RC**, retrospective cohort; **SPM**, second primary malignancy; **tMN**, therapy-related myeloid neoplasm; **T/S**, telomere to single copy ratio, a measure of telomere length; **VAF**, variant allele frequency; **VTE**, venous thromboembolism; **y**, years

Table S2. Summary of clonal hematopoiesis (CH) results in original studies investigating the association between CH and outcomes in hematopoietic cell

transplantation (HCT).

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^aClonal expansion is defined here as an increase in the VAF of pre-existing CH mutations; clonal evolution is acquisition of new CH mutations.

AdjHR, adjusted Hazard Ratio; **AFiH**, atrial fibrillation in-hospital; **BM**, bone marrow; CH**,** clonal hematopoiesis; **CIR/P**, cumulative incidence of relapse/progression; **CR**, complete remission; **d**, days; **DLBCL**, diffuse large B-cell lymphoma; **DRP**, DNA repair pathway genes; **DTA**, *DNMT3A*, *TET2*, or *ASXL1* mutations; **FDR**, false discovery rate; **GVHD**, graft-versus-host disease; **HCT**, hematopoietic cell transplantation; HR, hazards ratio; **HSC**, hematopoietic stem cell; **HUMARA**, human androgen receptor assay; **ICU**, intensive care unit; **IMiD**, immunomodulatory imide drugs; **IQR**, interquartile range; **m**, months; **MNC**, mononuclear cell; **MRD**, measurable residual disease; **NA**, not applicable; **NR**, not reported; **ns**, not statistically significant; **OS**, overall survival; **PB**, peripheral blood; **PBSC**, peripheral blood stem cell; **PFS**, progression-free survival; **PTCy**, post-transplant cyclophosphamide; **RR**, risk ratio; **tMN**, therapyrelated myeloid neoplasm; **VAF**, variant allele frequency; **y**, years

Figure S1. Funnel plots of autologous (auto) hematopoietic cell transplantation studies assessing clonal hematopoiesis-associated risk for therapy-related myeloid neoplasms (tMN) and overall survival (OS) with sufficient data to be included in the meta-analysis.

Auto tMN

Auto OS

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Figure S2. Stratified meta-analysis of the association between clonal hematopoiesis and risk for therapyrelated myeloid malignancies (tMN) in patients with lymphoma (top) and multiple myeloma (bottom) receiving autologous (auto) hematopoietic cell transplantation.

Auto tMN: Lymphoma

Auto tMN: Multiple Myeloma

Figure S3. Stratified meta-analysis of the association between clonal hematopoiesis and overall survival in patients with lymphoma (top) and multiple myeloma (bottom) receiving autologous (auto) hematopoietic cell transplantation.

Auto HCT: Lymphoma

Auto HCT: Multiple Myeloma

Figure S4. Funnel plots of allogeneic (allo) hematopoietic cell transplantation studies assessing clonal hematopoiesis-associated risk for relapse, overall survival (OS), chronic graft-versus-host disease (cGVHD), and acute graft-versus-host disease (aGVHD) with sufficient data to be included in the metaanalysis.

Figure S5. Stratified meta-analysis of the association between clonal hematopoiesis and outcomes (relapse, chronic graft-versus-host disease or cGVHD, and acute GVHD or aGVHD) in studies that included only related allogeneic (allo) hematopoietic cell transplantation donors.

Allo relapse: Related

Allo cGVHD: Related

AlloHCT aGVHD: Related

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