



Multiple Myeloma Testing, Staging and Prognosis

Multiple myeloma testing, staging, and prognosis can be a complex process involving various procedures. Learn more about the various kinds of tests, staging, and how health professionals determine a prognosis.



Testing

Health professionals use a range of tests throughout the course of multiple myeloma for:

[Initial diagnosis \(/node/998/\)](/node/998/)

[Determining the myeloma type \(/node/1012\)](/node/1012/)

[Staging the disease \(/node/1071/\)](/node/1071/)

Monitoring treatment response

The following tests and procedures can help accurately assess a patient's condition:

Urine Tests

Myeloma cells produce M-proteins, which [can be detected in urine \(/node/1062\)](/node/1062/) .

These M-proteins are called Bence Jones proteins, and their presence is a key indicator of light chain myeloma.

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WITHDRAW CONSENT

Bone Marrow Tests

Bone marrow examination is crucial for diagnosing multiple myeloma. A [bone marrow biopsy and fluid sample \(/node/1066\)](/node/1066) are performed to determine the presence and extent of myeloma cells in the bone marrow. These tests help confirm a diagnosis and assess the disease's extent.

Imaging Tests

Health professionals can [use various imaging tests \(/node/1067\)](/node/1067) to determine the impact of myeloma on the skeletal system. These tests may include:

- Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans

- X-rays

- Computed tomography (CT) scans

- Positron emission tomography (PET) scans



How Is Staging Done in Multiple Myeloma?

Staging of myeloma determines the disease's progression rate and helps guide treatment decisions. The previous staging system for myeloma was [the Durie-Salmon Staging System \(/node/1169\)](/node/1169). Today, doctors use the [Revised International Staging System \(R-ISS\) \(/node/1170\)](/node/1170) in clinical trials and practice. It incorporates prognostic factors to categorize patients into risk groups. However, it doesn't use simple stages one, two, and three. Rather, it provides a risk stratification based on a score. Higher scores indicate a more aggressive disease.

Finally, as of June 2025, the International Myeloma Society and the IMF International Myeloma Working Group published a new consensus classification of high-risk multiple myeloma. This framework is based on the most recent research data and advances in treatment. It provides a more modern and biologically informed approach to risk stratification. Through this framework, patients are divided into two groups — standard-risk and high-risk — and are treated accordingly.

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The growth rate of myeloma cells

The production rate of monoclonal antibody proteins

Cytokine production to enable communication between immune cells

The production of chemicals that damage or significantly impair other tissues, organs, or bodily functions

Find Out More About Multiple Myeloma

If you are looking for more information about multiple myeloma, visit our [free resource library \(/node/1265\)](#) for comprehensive, downloadable information. You can also reach out to one of our knowledgeable and compassionate team members [through our InfoLine \(/node/993\)](#).

Learn More About Tests



What Tests Do You Need? (/multiple-myeloma-tests)

Learn More About Staging and Risk Stratification

Stages of Multiple Myeloma (/phases-disease)

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The International Myeloma Foundation medical and editorial content team

Comprised of leading medical researchers, hematologists, oncologists, oncology-certified nurses, medical editors, and medical journalists, our team has extensive knowledge of the multiple myeloma treatment and care landscape.

Additionally, the content on this page is medically reviewed by myeloma physicians and healthcare professionals.

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