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## Aplastic Anemia

### What is aplastic anemia?

Aplastic anemia [<https://medlineplus.gov/anemia.html>] is a rare but serious blood disorder. If you have it, your bone marrow [<https://medlineplus.gov/bonemarrowdiseases.html>] doesn't make enough new blood cells. It happens when there is damage to stem cells inside your bone marrow. There are different types of aplastic anemia, including Fanconi anemia.

### What causes aplastic anemia?

The causes of aplastic anemia can include:

- Autoimmune disorders [<https://medlineplus.gov/autoimmunediseases.html>] , which are the most common cause
- Certain inherited gene changes, such as the one that can cause Fanconi anemia [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/fanconi-anemia/>]
- Toxic substances, such as pesticides [<https://medlineplus.gov/pesticides.html>] , arsenic [<https://medlineplus.gov/arsenic.html>] , and benzene
- Radiation therapy [<https://medlineplus.gov/radiationtherapy.html>] and chemotherapy [<https://medlineplus.gov/cancerchemotherapy.html>] for cancer
- Certain medicines
- Viral infections such as hepatitis [<https://medlineplus.gov/hepatitis.html>] , Epstein-Barr virus, or HIV [<https://medlineplus.gov/hiv.html>]
- Pregnancy

In many people, the cause is unknown. This is called idiopathic aplastic anemia.

### What are the symptoms of aplastic anemia?

Aplastic anemia can develop suddenly or slowly. It can be mild or severe. The symptoms of aplastic anemia can include:

- Fatigue [<https://medlineplus.gov/fatigue.html>]
- Weakness
- Dizziness [<https://medlineplus.gov/dizzinessandvertigo.html>]
- Shortness of breath [<https://medlineplus.gov/breathingproblems.html>]
- Easy bruising [<https://medlineplus.gov/bruises.html>] or bleeding [<https://medlineplus.gov/bleeding.html>]

### What other problems can aplastic anemia cause?

Aplastic anemia can cause other problems, including frequent infections and bleeding. It raises your risk of developing a serious blood disorder [<https://medlineplus.gov/blooddisorders.html>] .

If not treated, aplastic anemia can also lead to heart problems such as an arrhythmia [<https://medlineplus.gov/arrhythmia.html>] (a problem with the rate or rhythm of your heartbeat), an enlarged heart, or heart failure [<https://medlineplus.gov/heartfailure.html>] .

### How is aplastic anemia diagnosed?

To find out if you have aplastic anemia, your doctor will:

- Take your medical and your family medical histories
- Do a physical exam
- Order tests, such as tests to check if you have low numbers of cells in your bone marrow and blood

## What are the treatments for aplastic anemia?

If you have aplastic anemia, your doctor will create a treatment plan for you. The plan will be based on how severe the anemia is and what is causing it. Treatments can include:

- Blood transfusions [<https://medlineplus.gov/bloodtransfusionanddonation.html>]
- Blood and marrow stem cell transplants [<https://medlineplus.gov/stemcells.html>]
- Medicines to suppress your immune system

Because of the risk of blood disorders, your doctor will monitor your condition and screen you for blood disorders regularly.

*NIH: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute*

## Start Here

- Aplastic Anemia [<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/anemia/aplastic-anemia>]  (National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute)  
Also in Spanish [<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/es/salud/anemia/anemia-aplasica>]
- Aplastic Anemia: Symptoms and Conditions [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/aplastic-anemia/symptoms-causes/syc-20355015?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)  
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/aplastic-anemia/symptoms-causes/syc-20355015?p=1>]

## Diagnosis and Tests

- Blood Tests [<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/blood-tests>]  (National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute)  
Also in Spanish [<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/es/salud/analisis-de-sangre>]
- Complete Blood Count (CBC) [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/complete-blood-count-cbc/>]  (National Library of Medicine)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/conteo-sanguíneo-completo/>]
- Reticulocyte Count [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/reticulocyte-count/>]  (National Library of Medicine)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/conteo-de-reticulocitos/>]

## Treatments and Therapies

- Iron Chelation [<https://www.aamds.org/treatment/iron-chelation>] (Aplastic Anemia and MDS International Foundation)
- Treatments for Blood Disorders [<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/blood-bone-marrow-treatments>]   
(National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute)  
Also in Spanish [<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/es/salud/sangre-y-medula-osea-tratamientos>]
- What Are the Treatments for Aplastic Anemia? [<https://www.aamds.org/questions/what-are-treatments-aplastic-anemia#>]  
(Aplastic Anemia and MDS International Foundation)

## Related Issues

- Special Issues for People with Aplastic Anemia [<https://www.aamds.org/about/aplastic-anemia/special-issues>]  
(Aplastic Anemia and MDS International Foundation)

## Specifics

- Aplastic Anemia and Myelodysplastic Syndromes [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/blood-diseases/aplastic-anemia-myelodysplastic-syndromes/all-content>]   
(National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases)
- Aplastic Anemia: Types [<https://www.aamds.org/aplastic-anemia/types>]  
(Aplastic Anemia and MDS International Foundation)

- Severe Aplastic Anemia (SAA) [<https://www.nmdp.org/patients/understanding-transplant/diseases-treated-by-transplant/severe-aplastic-anemia>] (National Marrow Donor Program)

## Genetics

- Fanconi anemia: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/fanconi-anemia>]  (National Library of Medicine)

## Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: Anemia, Aplastic [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Anemia,+Aplastic%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

## Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: A decade of acquired aplastic anemia: insights from a Central South... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40687162>]
- Article: Post-traumatic growth experience with kinship hematopoietic stem cells transplantation in patients... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40638637>]
- Article: Efficacy and safety of immunosuppressive therapy versus cyclosporine combined with avatrombopag... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40617806>]
- Aplastic Anemia -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Anemia%2C+Aplastic%22%5Bmajr%3Aexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22+%5Bdat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

## Find an Expert

- National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute [<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/>] 
- National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/>] 

## Children

- Aplastic Anemia [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/aplastic-anemia.html>] (Nemours Foundation)  
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/aplastic-anemia.html>]
- Fanconi Anemia (for Parents) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/fanconi-anemia.html>] (Nemours Foundation)  
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/fanconi-anemia.html>]

## Women

- Iron-Deficiency Anemia [<https://womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/iron-deficiency-anemia>]  
(Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health)  
Also in Spanish [<https://espanol.womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/iron-deficiency-anemia>]

## Patient Handouts

- Aplastic anemia [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000554.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000554.htm>]
- Fanconi anemia [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000334.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000334.htm>]



## MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

Aplastic anemia [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000554.htm>]

Fanconi anemia [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000334.htm>]

## Related Health Topics

Anemia [<https://medlineplus.gov/anemia.html>]

Bone Marrow Diseases [<https://medlineplus.gov/bonemarrowdiseases.html>]

Bone Marrow Transplantation [<https://medlineplus.gov/bonemarrowtransplantation.html>]

## National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Aplastic Anemia* is the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute [<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/>]

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