

What is the role of brentuximab vedotin as first-line salvage therapy prior to ASCT?

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Welcome to *Managing Hodgkin Lymphoma*. I am Dr. John Sweetenham. I am frequently asked, "What is the role of brentuximab vedotin as first-line salvage therapy prior to autologous stem cell transplantation?" This is a really important question for a number of reasons, not least because we know that brentuximab vedotin now has a role in posttransplant consolidation. The question is, could it still be used prior to the transplant, and would consolidation therapy with the same agent then still have a role? At the moment, there are a number of single-agent studies which have demonstrated a role for brentuximab vedotin immediately prior to stem cell transplant. One study in particular, performed in California, demonstrates that 37 patients with relapsed and refractory Hodgkin lymphoma received single-agent brentuximab vedotin, a response rate of 86% was demonstrated. The majority of these patients, in fact it was 32, were able to proceed to high-dose therapy and stem cell transplant with a normal peri-transplant course. The ability to collect stem cells was not affected, and these patients tolerated their treatment normally. This gives a clue that single-agent activity of brentuximab vedotin prior to a transplant is high. At the moment, there are ongoing studies adding brentuximab vedotin to other conventional regimens, such as the ICE regimen which is a commonly used chemotherapy salvage regimen. Those studies are ongoing, but the hope is that by combining antibody-drug conjugates plus conventional chemotherapy, that we will see a higher rate of complete response and PET negativity, which will hopefully then convert into a higher survival rate following autologous stem cell transplantation. As I already mentioned, based on the data that we already have on re-treatment with brentuximab vedotin, the use of this agent as consolidation therapy in those patients who have BV prior to their transplant does seem to be a rational treatment approach. Also, it appears to be a tolerable approach for these patients. Thank you for viewing this activity.