US FDA allows expanded use of Bristol Myers' cell therapy for blood cancer

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London: The U.S. Food and Drug Administration on Friday allowed the use of cell therapy Abecma from Bristol-Myers Squibb and 2seventybio in less severely affected patients with a type of blood cancer.

The decision comes after a panel of expert advisers voted in favor of Abecma's use as an earlier treatment for multiple myeloma, a common form of cancer that affects older adults.

The cell therapy is already approved in the U.S. to treat patients with multiple myeloma who have received four or more prior lines of treatment.

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Bristol Myers' application included late-stage data that showed Abecma helped extend the time before disease progression by 13.3 months on average in patients whose cancer has returned or stopped responding to at least two prior treatments.

This compared to 4.4 months progression-free survival seen in trial patients who received standard of care.

Analysts estimate $601 million in sales for Abecma in 2024, according to LSEG data.

The current standard of care includes use of non CAR-T therapies or regimens in less severely affected patients.

Approved medications for the condition include J&J's Darzalex and generic cancer drugs such as pomalidomide and bortezomib.

CAR-T therapies have recently come under scrutiny from health regulators over the risk of secondary cancers.

Safety warnings were added to CAR-T therapies' prescribing information earlier this year after reports of T-cell cancers following treatments.
(Reporting by Sneha S K, Bhanvi Satija and Sriparna Roy in Bengaluru; Editing by Sriraj Kalluvila and Krishna Chandra Eluri)

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