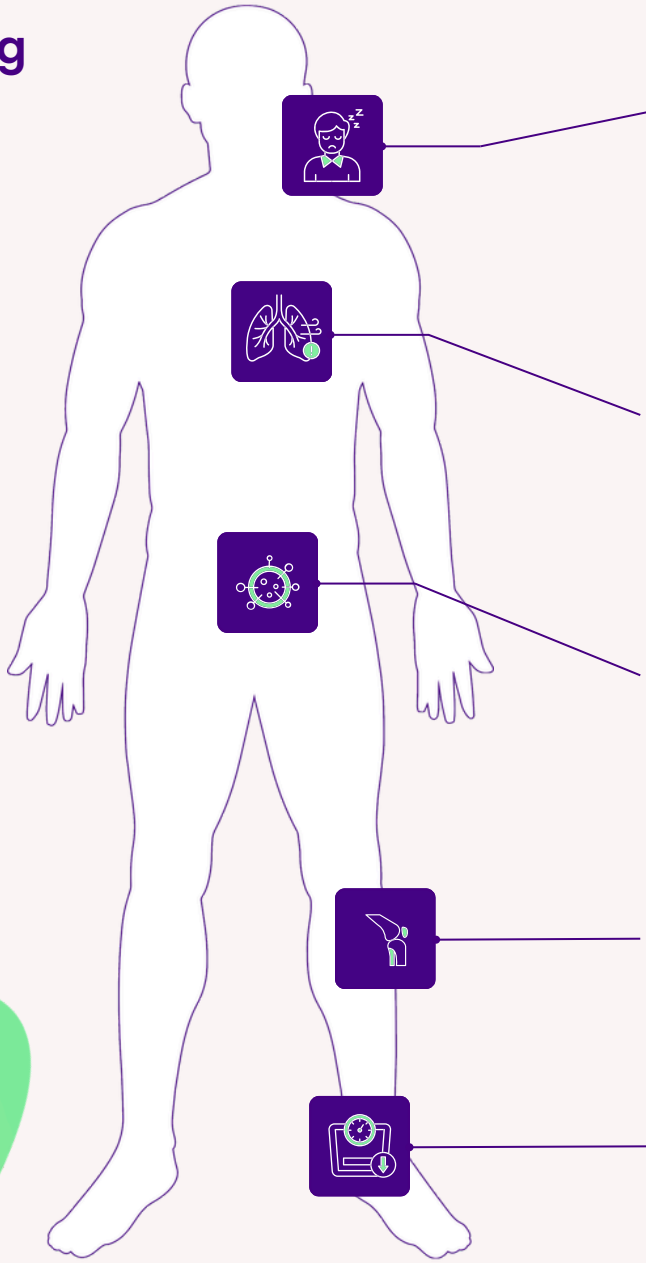
Maybe it's myeloma?

Early warning signs



Fatigue
- anaemia
- raised raised ESR with no other explanation
- renal insufficiency

Breathlessness
- anaemia
- renal insufficiency

Recurring infections
- leukopenia
- antibody deficiency

Unexplained bone/back pain
- raised calcium

Unintentional weight loss
- increased protein–albumin gap

Recognise
early warning signs

Request
correct blood tests

Serum protein electrophoresis (SPEP)
Serum free light chain (sFLC)
Tests for organ dysfunction (FBC, UEC, eGFR, corrected calcium, LFTs)

Refer
to haematology

when abnormal results are identified

Immediate emergency referral: acute neurological symptoms, suspected spinal cord compression, severe new back pain, severe hypercalcaemia, renal failure or symptoms of hyperviscosity

Myeloma Australia
myeloma.org.au
Support line: 1800 693 566

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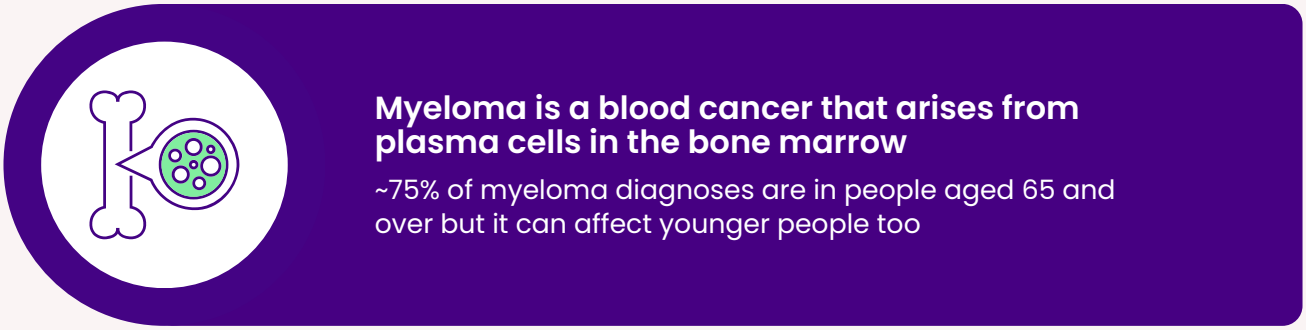
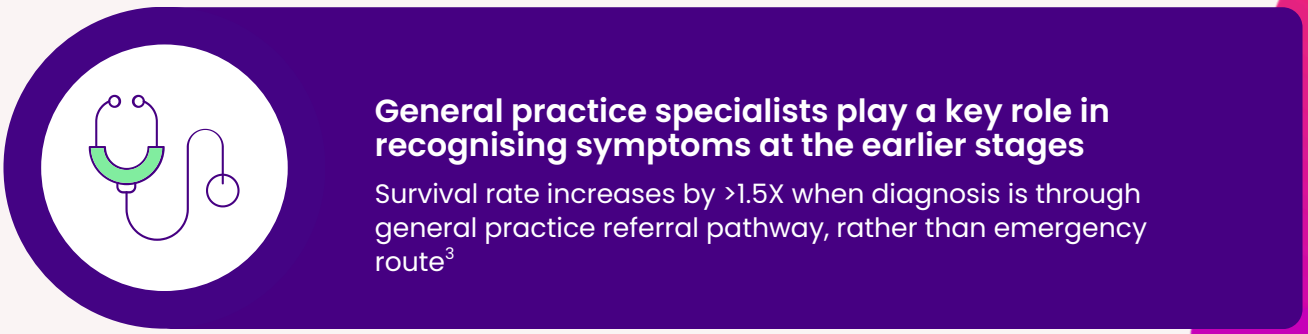


Myeloma is a blood cancer that arises from plasma cells in the bone marrow

~75% of myeloma diagnoses are in people aged 65 and over but it can affect younger people too

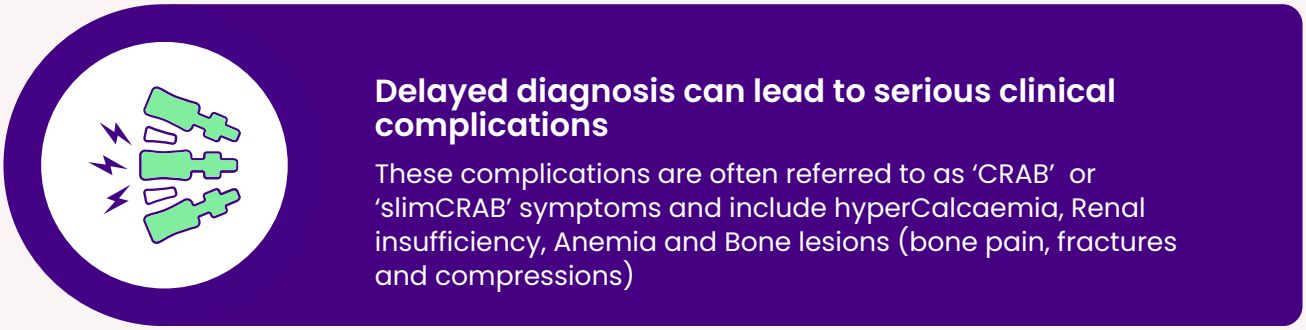
Symptoms are often non-specific

Challenging to diagnose and often confused with signs of ageing. Median time to diagnosis is 108.6 days[2]



General practice specialists play a key role in recognising symptoms at the earlier stages

Survival rate increases by >1.5X when diagnosis is through general practice referral pathway, rather than emergency route[3]



Delayed diagnosis can lead to serious clinical complications

These complications are often referred to as 'CRAB' or 'slimCRAB' symptoms and include hyperCalcaemia, Renal insufficiency, Anemia and Bone lesions (bone pain, fractures and compressions)

REFERENCES:

1. Myeloma – An Introduction - https://www.myeloma.org.uk/library/myeloma-an-introduction/ (Accessed 21/07/2025)
2. Myeloma Patients Europe. The Myeloma Diagnosis Challenge. https://www.mpeurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Myeloma-Diagnosis-Challenge.jpg (Accessed 21/07/2025)
3. Elliss-Brookes L, McPhail S, Ives A, et al. Routes to diagnosis for cancer - determining the patient journey using multiple routine data dets. Br J Cancer 2012;107:1220-6

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