

BATTLING LEUKEMIA

Blood Related Diseases are Expected to Account for 9.5 % of the Deaths from Cancer in 2018

New Cases of Blood Cancers are Expected to Account for 10 % of the Estimated New Cancer Cases Diagnosed in the U.S. in 2018

Leukemia is a very serious condition as it affects the blood cells. Leukemia is often called blood cancer as it causes irregular white blood cells to form in a patient's bone marrow. Every patient can experience symptoms and stages of leukemia differently so it is crucial to recognize the possibility of disease if a patient is showing possible signs of the illness.

Please use this guide as a resource for knowledge and understanding of leukemia causes, symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment.

01 | Causes

The exact cause of leukemia is not known however it is believed to be a combination of genetic and environmental factors. Leukemia patients show mutations in their DNA which triggers the abnormal white cell growth. There are identifiable chromosome traits that are related to patients diagnosed with leukemia. Some hereditary conditions like Down syndrome and Noonan syndrome, can cause a higher risk of developing leukemia.

02 | Symptoms

There are several forms of leukemia or blood cancers, all having relatively similar symptoms. Leukemia developing slowly may not show immediate signs or symptoms, while aggressive forms can have severe symptoms. In either case symptoms occur from the loss of function in normal blood cells due to the accumulation of abnormal cells in the body; and appear as:

- Fevers
- Night Sweats
- Swollen Lymph Nodes
- Fatigue
- Frequent Infections
- Bone or Joint Pain

03 | Diagnosis

Confirmed diagnosis of leukemia can only be established once a blood sample is provided and examined by a hematologist. Medical history and physical exam help reach to the conclusion if a blood test is necessary. Bone marrow samples are also used to confirm a leukemia diagnosis. If leukemia is suspected though testing is conducted to diagnose the specific type of leukemia and the current stage of the disease.

04 | Treatment

Options vary from patient to patient based on medical needs. Treatment options are reliant on the type of blood cancer, the stage of the disease, and overall health of the patient. Most commonly leukemia is treated with chemotherapy and radiation therapy. Other options include biological therapy, targeted therapy, and stem cell transplant. There is no cure for leukemia but remission is possible in some instances.

For more information on leukemia and other blood cancer conditions, please visit: <http://www.lls.org/>

Did You Know?

Approximately every 9 minutes a person in the U.S. dies from a blood cancer

References

<https://www.lls.org/facts-and-statistics/facts-and-statistics-overview>

https://www.medicinenet.com/leukemia/article.htm#how_do_physicians_diagnose_leukemia