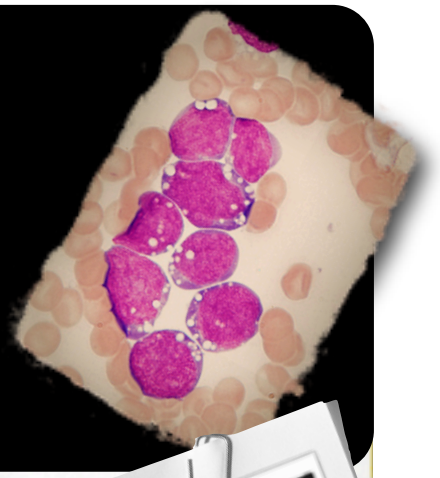
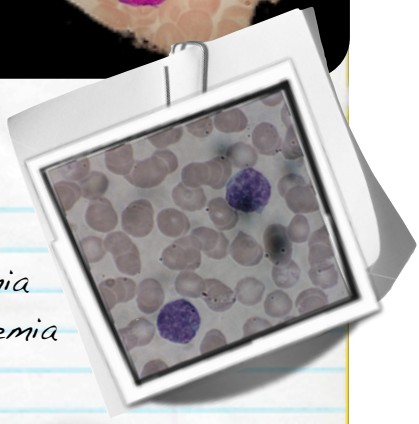
ACUTE LYMPHOCYTIC LEUKEMIA



PROFILE



Scientific Names:

Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia
Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia
Acute Lymphoid Leukemia.

Common Name: Leukemia

Short name: ALL

Brief description:

Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia is a fast-growing cancer of white blood cells. There are few types of white blood cells. One of them are called lymphocytes, which are used to fight infections. In this cancer, the bone marrow reproduces immature white blood cells (also called leukemia cells) that can't develop or fight any infections. They also develop inside the lymphocytes which makes those cells become abnormal as well. They overproduce, spreads to other organs and end up crowding out the normal red, white blood cells and platelets in the bone marrow which the body needs to function properly.

DID YOU KNOW?

Why is it called ALL?

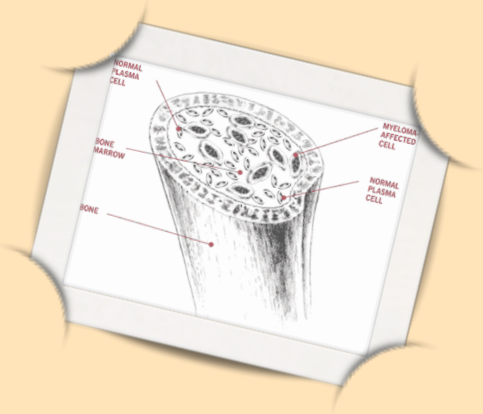
Acute: it could be fatal as little as to a few weeks if it was treated.

Lymphocytic: A type of white blood cells that are used to fight infections.

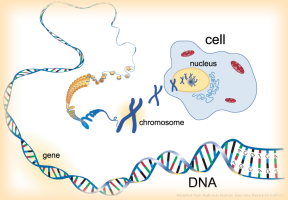
Leukemia: Cells that can't help the body fight infections like normal blood cells could.

CAUSES

It all starts with one single cell in the bone marrow. Although, there aren't any obvious or exact cause found yet, there are some factors that increased the chances of developing ALL:



- Chromosome problems (structures that carry genetic material)



- Exposed to high doses of Radiation (could be before birth too)

- Chemotherapy treatments done in the pass (drugs used to treat cancer)

- Receiving bone marrow transplants

- People who have genetic disorders or may have a sibling who has Leukemia do also have a higher chance of having ALL.

✱ NOTE: ALL is not contagious therefore it is a non infectious disease.

SYMPTOMS

Some symptoms of ALL may be similar to common or non-life threatening diseases, therefore there are blood and bone marrow tests done to make a diagnosis.

Some symptoms are:

- ☐ Bone/joint pains
- ☐ Gets easily bruised and bleeds continuously because the lack of platelets that control and help heal the wounds. (e.g. Bleeding gums, nosebleeds or even menstrual irregularities)
- ☐ Weak or Tired
- ☐ Gets fever without any obvious causes (frequent infections)
- ☐ Pale-looking
- ☐ Pinhead-sized red spots under skin (petechiae)
- ☐ Vomiting
- ☐ Pain below ribs

1.

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TREATMENTS

The goal of ALL treatments are to cure the disease. Although children with ALL seemed to do better and are more likely to cure ALL, the number of adults who are in remissions have increased.

The very first treatment all patients would need to start with is chemotherapy.

Then, treatments are separated into two parts where one is called the induction therapy (kills as many ALL cells as possible, tries to get blood counts back to normal). Followed by the second part which is called the post-induction therapy is needed when an ALL patient is in remission, but still has some ALL cells that cannot be found by common blood or marrow tests.

(Radiation therapy is another on that would be given to the spine or brain to check if leukemia cells are killed and whether they should give more doses of chemotherapy or not. Bone marrow or stem cell transplant are also recommended if your leukemia cells don't seem to respond or react to other treatments.)

Side effects may include:

* Red blood cells and Platelets may decrease.
* White blood cells would decrease causing a bigger risk of getting infected.

There are some ways to lessen the side effects:

* Blood transfusion to increase the amount of platelets and red blood cells.
* Antibiotics to help fight the infection.

OUTLOOK

As mentioned above, children do better than adults. Nearly all children could go into complete remission (when there are no more signs or symptoms of cancer). However, without treatments, an ALL patient is expected only to live for about 3 months.

These are specifications or similarities of ALL patients who do better:

- Younger adults that are below 50 years old.
- Children aged 1 - 9
- People who have less than 50,000 white blood cells when they had their first check.

PREVENTION ... ...AND MORE...

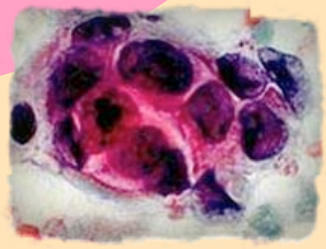
PREVENTION

Because the cause is unknown, it is quite impossible to prevent ALL. However, you could reduce the chances of ALL by avoiding any radiation, toxins or chemical exposures.

COMPLICATIONS

However, not everyone would be able to get into complete remission. Some ALL patients may do even worse and would cause some of these complications:

- Bleeding
- Damages done to organs from chemotherapy
- Life-threatening infection
- Cancer has already spread to other parts of the body.



FACTS

CURING RATES

Overall cure rates for children is around 80%, 45% - 60% for adults.

RATES OF GETTING A.L.L.

Although ALL could occur in adults, it occurs more in children especially 3 - 7 year olds.

OTHERS

ALL patients are more likely to bleed or be infected because the lacking of normal blood cells and platelets, it could develop life-threatening symptoms.

BIBS

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