ACUTE LYMPHOBLASTIC LEUKEMIA (ALL)

Acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL), one of the four main types of leukemia, is a blood cancer that starts in bone marrow and moves into the blood quickly. ALL is an aggressive type of leukemia; without treatment, most patients with acute leukemia would live only a few months.

FACTS AND FIGURES

- Researchers estimate that by 2020, nearly 412,000 people worldwide will be diagnosed with some type of leukemia.¹
- Approximately 66,030 people currently live with, or are in remission from, ALL in the United States, with about 4 in 10 cases in adults.¹
- The estimated overall incidence of ALL in Europe is 1.28 per 1,000,000 individuals annually.⁴
- For adult patients with relapsed or refractory ALL, the five-year overall survival rate is less than 10 percent.⁵

DIAGNOSIS

- A diagnosis of ALL is usually made through blood and bone marrow tests, based on information on blood cell counts, blood chemistry studies and bone marrow sampling.¹
- Patients with ALL often have several non-specific symptoms, including weight loss, fever, night sweats, fatigue, and loss of appetite.¹

RISK FACTORS

- The risk for developing ALL is highest in children younger than 5 years of age. Overall, about 4 of every 10 cases of ALL are in adults.¹
- Possible risk factors for ALL include the following:¹
  - Being male
  - Being white
  - Past treatment with chemotherapy or radiation therapy
  - Being exposed to high levels of radiation in the environment (such as nuclear radiation)
  - Having certain genetic disorders, such as Down syndrome
  - Being older than 70

PROGNOSIS & TREATMENT

- Prognosis for ALL remains poor. While about 80-90% of adult patients will have complete remissions at some point during treatment, about half will relapse, so overall cure rate is around 40%.¹
- The main treatment for ALL currently used is long-term chemotherapy and various combination chemotherapy regimens.¹
- Because leukemia cells spread widely throughout the bone marrow and to many other organs, it is not possible to cure this type of cancer by surgery.¹
- For patients who do not respond to chemotherapy, stem cell transplant is often the best chance for a cure in the advanced stage of the disease.⁶
  - Additional therapeutic options are needed to help patients achieve hematologic remission so they may be eligible for transplant.⁶

REFERENCES