Blood cancers remain one of the greatest health challenges of our lifetime. In 2020, more than 1 million people worldwide were diagnosed with a blood cancer.[1] And while no two blood cancers are alike – whether leukemia, lymphoma, or myeloma -- treatments vary greatly.[2]

What Makes Blood Cancers Unique?

Oncologists categorize cancers as solid tumors or blood cancers. Blood cancers, also known as hematologic cancers, are cancers of the blood cells, while solid tumor cancers are cancers of any of the other body organs or tissues.[3] These cancers are alike in some ways – both solid tumors and blood cancers are an overgrowth of abnormal cells – but there are some key differences:

Age: While solid tumors often affect middle-aged to older people[4], blood cancers are common in children or the elderly. Blood cancers are the most common cancers in children.[5] But some types of blood cancers affect mainly older adults – for example
acute myeloid leukemia.[6] Subtypes: Blood cancers generally originate in the white blood cells, but the type differs depending on the type of white blood cell, and this drastically impacts treatment and prognosis. Treatment: Some treatments for blood cancers are similar to those of solid tumors – like chemotherapy and targeted therapies. But because blood cancers affect blood, which flows throughout the body, surgery is not an option. One treatment option for people with certain types of blood cancers is called a stem cell transplant, where a person is given healthy stem cells to replace damaged stem cells.[7]

The needs of patients with blood cancers are unique and differ from those with solid tumors. They are challenging to treat and therefore they require a specialized treatment approach to meet their needs. With a long heritage in blood cancers, Pfizer is uniquely positioned to tackle these challenges.

Making an Impact in Blood Cancer

Today, Pfizer has eight approved and investigational medicines for blood cancers, bringing hope and relief to thousands of people. These medicines span eight types of blood cancer and seven mechanisms of action. [8],[9],[10]

Over the last decade, we’ve made strides in blood cancers, but our work is far from finished. We seek to invest in game-changing science to deliver tomorrow’s breakthroughs for diseases that represent significant areas of need for innovation.

Using our long-standing experience in the treatment of blood cancers, Pfizer is now working to address the challenges of multiple myeloma. While there are several approved myeloma drugs[11],[12], the outcomes remain dire, and there's still a substantial unmet need for people living with the second most common blood cancer.[13] This year, approximately 34,920 new cases of multiple myeloma will be diagnosed in the U.S.[14] and over 176,000 globally. In the U.S., the median survival is just over 5 years, and most patients receive four or more lines of therapy.[15]

Our in-depth understanding of the science behind blood cancers and the leadership we have developed across our existing blood cancer medicines positions us for success as we strive to bring breakthroughs for patients with multiple myeloma.

Our Vision for a Better Future

As a scientific community, we are on the precipice of a new era for people living with blood cancers. As we continue to deepen our understanding of the science behind blood
cancers, we will continue to innovate to develop effective treatments for people living with these diseases.

With scientific expertise, passion, and agility we can offer hope for people with these diseases. For the millions living today and diagnosed tomorrow, we will work relentlessly to deliver on our mission: breakthroughs that change patients’ lives.


[8] U.S. Prescribing Information for BOSULIF, BESPONSA, DAURISMO, RUXIENCE, MYLOTARG and XALKORI.

[9] European Medicines Agency Summary of Product Characteristics for BOSULIF, BESPONSA, DAURISMO, RUXIENCE, MYLOTARG and TORISEL.


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