

Instruction regarding home care frequently involves teaching about medication schedules, observing for side effects or toxicities that require further evaluation, taking measures to prevent or manage these problems, and caring for special devices such as central venous catheters.<sup>†</sup> Compliance is an important issue, because poor adherence to regimens can result in disease relapse or serious medical complications. Every effort must be made to ensure that the family understands the importance of adhering to the prescribed treatment schedule and measures to improve compliance (see [Chapter 20](#)).

## Cessation of Therapy

Care does not end when the child completes therapy. With the increasing awareness of late effects, nurses play an important role in the assessment of the child for problems, such as delayed growth, secondary malignancies, and disturbances in any body system. The family needs to be aware of the importance of continued medical supervision. Other health care professionals caring for the child (such as school nurses, family physicians, and dentists) should be informed of the child's cancer diagnosis. As children reach adulthood, they may benefit from genetic counseling regarding cancers that are likely to be inherited. If the possibility of infertility exists, fertility options should be discussed for pubertal males and females prior to the start of treatment. The [Children's Oncology Group \(2013\)](#) has developed guidelines for long-term follow-up care for pediatric cancer survivors. Nurses involved with these children should be familiar with these guidelines and use all opportunities to teach patients and families regarding needed continued care.

## Cancers of Blood and Lymph Systems

### Leukemias

#### Acute Leukemias

**Leukemia** is a broad term given to a group of malignant diseases of