

Title:

Different Forms of Acute Leukemia

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447

Summary:

Leukemia is a disease of the bone marrow and blood that is known to affect normal blood cell

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childhood leukemia, acute leukemia

Article Body:

Leukemia is a disease of the bone marrow and blood that is known to affect normal blood cell production. Normal blood cells have a limited period of life and they need to be constantly replaced by fresh, young cells to carry on their activity. There is a type of cell within the bone marrow (stem cell) that matures into the type of blood cells that the body needs. In normal condition, these stem cells develop either into red blood cells, white blood cells or platelets, into a controlled way. Leukemia perturbs the normal development of blood cells and causes the accumulation of partially developed cells, that aren't able to fulfill their role inside the organism.

Judging by the speed of development and the persistence of the disorder, there are two types of leukemia: acute leukemia and chronic leukemia. Judging by the types of stem cells affected by the disorder, leukemia can either be lymphocytic or myelogenous.

Acute leukemia differs from chronic leukemia by the levels that stem cells are able to reach in their development (stem cells that present anomalies still manage to partially develop and either resemble immature cells or complete, normal white blood cells).

Inside the body of people who suffer from acute leukemia of myelogenous, the bone marrow produces stem cells which form a kind of partially matured white blood cell called myeloblast. This type of blood cell doesn't reach a full maturity state and can't carry out its intended role. Myelogenous cells tend to multiply very fast and exceed the numbers of healthy blood cells, facilitating the occurrence of anemia, infections and weakening the immune system of the body. The diseased cells can also spread to other places of the organism, such

as organs.

As statistics indicate, there are lots of annual cases of the disease, acute leukemia of myelogenous form being the most common type of leukemia. Although the disease is known to regress quickly when the appropriate treatment is administered, if left untreated it may cause the death of the affected person. This form of leukemia tends to recidivate and it can redevelop with time.

Regardless of age and sex, many people are diagnosed with forms of leukemia. Children tend to respond better to some types of leukemia, while adults difficultly cope with the disease. The cases of acute leukemia exceed those of chronic leukemia by approximately 10 percent. Older adults seem to be affected the most by acute leukemia. Around two thirds of acute leukemia cases seem to occur after the age of 60. Leukemia is a serious form of cancer and it needs immediate treatment. If treated correctly, especially in its incipient stages, leukemia can be successfully overcome.