Leukemia/Lymphoma

Leukemia

Leukemia is a group of cancers involving blood cells. These cancers begin most often in bone marrow, where the abnormal cells formed by leukemia displace normal blood cells.

Leukemia occurs most often in adults over 55 years of age, but it is also the most common cancer in children younger than 15 years. The specific type of leukemia is determined by which type of blood cell has become cancerous, and also whether the leukemia is acute or chronic. Acute leukemia tends to become worse quickly, while chronic leukemia tends to become worse more slowly. The specifics of treatment and prognosis for leukemia are deterimined by which type of blood cell is involved and whether the leukemia is acute or chronic.

Treatments for leukemia can include chemotherapy, radiation therapy, blood or bone marrow transplant, and biological therapy.

Bone marrow transplants are also called stem cell transplants. This procedure is performed after high dose chemotherapy or a type of radiation treatment known as total-body irradiation or TBI. In some instances extra radiation may be given to the brain and/or testicles in men for high-risk disease features.

Lymphoma

Lymphoma is a category of cancers that develop in the lymphatic system, which is the part of the immune system that helps fight disease and infection. Lymphoma can begin in almost any region of the body.

Hodgkin?s lymphoma is a rare kind of lymphoma. The other more common lymphatic cancers are called non-Hodgkin lymphomas. These two types of lymphomas can occur in both children and adults.

Radiation therapy and chemotherapy are the most common treatments for Hodgkin's lymphoma. Bone marrow transplantation, peripheral stem cell transplantation and biological therapies are currently being studied in clinical trials for the treatment of Hodgkin?s lymphoma.

Patients with non-Hodgkin lymphoma are most often treated with chemotherapy, although some patients may receive radiation therapy, or a combination of these treatments. In some cases, bone marrow transplantation, biological therapies or surgery may be considered.

UCSF Radiation Oncology is part of the UCSF Comprehensive Cancer Center, a member of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network; an alliance of 26 of the world?s leading cancer centers. We are known, nationally and internationally, for our advanced and state-of-the art treatments for leukemia and lymphoma. Our treatments for these cancers are individually designed for each patient.

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