

Childhood Leukemia: A Comprehensive Guide for Families, Friends, and Caregivers

Childhood leukemia is a type of cancer that affects the blood and bone marrow. It is the most common type of cancer in children, accounting for about 30% of all childhood cancers. Leukemia is a serious disease, but it is important to remember that it is curable. With early diagnosis and treatment, most children with leukemia can go on to live full and healthy lives.



Childhood Leukemia: A Guide for Families, Friends & Caregivers by Nancy Keene

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

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Types of Leukemia

There are two main types of leukemia: acute leukemia and chronic leukemia.

- **Acute leukemia** is a fast-growing type of leukemia that can develop quickly. It is the most common type of leukemia in children.

- **Chronic leukemia** is a slow-growing type of leukemia that develops over time. It is less common in children than acute leukemia.

There are also different subtypes of leukemia, depending on the type of blood cell that is affected.

- **Lymphoblastic leukemia** is a type of leukemia that affects lymphocytes, which are a type of white blood cell.
- **Myeloid leukemia** is a type of leukemia that affects myeloid cells, which are a type of white blood cell that can develop into red blood cells, platelets, or other types of white blood cells.

Symptoms of Leukemia

The symptoms of leukemia can vary depending on the type of leukemia and the stage of the disease.

Common symptoms of leukemia include:

- Fever
- Fatigue
- Pale skin
- Easy bruising or bleeding
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Bone pain
- Headaches

- Nausea and vomiting
- Weight loss

Diagnosis of Leukemia

Leukemia is diagnosed through a blood test and a bone marrow biopsy.

- **A blood test** can show if there are too many white blood cells in the blood or if the white blood cells are not functioning properly.
- **A bone marrow biopsy** is a procedure in which a small sample of bone marrow is removed from the hip bone and examined under a microscope. A bone marrow biopsy can show if there are leukemia cells in the bone marrow.

Treatment of Leukemia

The treatment of leukemia depends on the type of leukemia and the stage of the disease.

Common treatments for leukemia include:

- **Chemotherapy** is a type of medication that kills cancer cells.
- **Radiation therapy** is a type of treatment that uses high-energy rays to kill cancer cells.
- **Stem cell transplant** is a procedure in which healthy stem cells from a donor are transplanted into the patient.

Prognosis of Leukemia

The prognosis of leukemia depends on the type of leukemia and the stage of the disease.

The overall survival rate for children with leukemia is about 85%.

Support for Families and Friends of Children with Leukemia

It can be very difficult to cope with a child who has leukemia. There are many resources available to help families and friends of children with leukemia.

Some helpful resources include:

- **The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS)** is a non-profit organization that provides support and information to families affected by leukemia.
- **The American Cancer Society (ACS)** is a non-profit organization that provides support and information to cancer patients and their families.
- **Children's Oncology Group (COG)** is a clinical research organization that conducts clinical trials for children with cancer.

Childhood leukemia is a serious disease, but it is important to remember that it is curable. With early diagnosis and treatment, most children with leukemia can go on to live full and healthy lives.

If you have a child who has been diagnosed with leukemia, there are many resources available to help you cope. Please reach out to these organizations for support and information.

Websites

- The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
- The American Cancer Society
- Children's Oncology Group

Books

- **Childhood Leukemia: A Guide for Families** by The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
- **The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's Guide to Leukemia** by The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
- **Childhood Leukemia: A Parent's Guide** by The American Cancer Society

Articles

- Leukemia in Children by The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
- Leukemia in Children by The American Cancer Society
- Childhood Leukemia by Children's Oncology Group



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