Symptoms of Leukemia

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En Español (Spanish Version)

Symptoms of leukemia develop as the white blood cells stop functioning normally. With acute leukemia, serious infections or easy bleeding or bruising usually prompt a patient to see his or her doctor. With chronic leukemia, it may take a long time for symptoms to occur. When they do, they may be mild and mimic symptoms of other disorders, with fatigue the most likely symptom or complaint.

When white blood cells are no longer able to help fight bacteria, viruses, and other germs, infections occur more often than normal. Common symptoms of leukemia-related infections include:

- Fever, chills
- Flu-like symptoms
- Minor cuts that heal slowly and the area around the cut may become red and swollen
- Excessive reactions to insect bites

If the number of red blood cells drops and anemia occurs, fewer cells are available to carry oxygen throughout the body. Symptoms include:

- Weakness and fatigue
- Pale skin
- Headache

If there are not enough platelets, the blood will not clot properly. Symptoms include:

- Bleeding or bruising easily
- Nosebleeds
- Bleeding gums
- Tiny red spots under the skin

Additional symptoms may develop as leukemia cells move through the body and invade the organs. These include:

- Swollen, tender lymph nodes, liver, or spleen
- Puffy gums
- Rash
- Weight loss
- Bone or joint pain
- Difficulty breathing
- Swelling of the testicles
- Meningitis, with:
  - Headaches
  - Nausea
  - Loss of muscle control
  - Seizures
  - Symptoms of a stroke

REFERENCES:

