

Childhood Leukemia: What Is AML?

Childhood leukemia is a cancer of the white blood cells.

That may sound scary, but with treatment, most kids get better.

It may help to know what to expect as you start this journey.

With acute myelogenous leukemia or A-M-L...

the body makes too many unhealthy, or sick, myeloblasts...

which are a kind of white blood cell.

They can take over the body, so that it can't make normal blood cells.

These unhealthy cells can spread to other parts of the body...

like the brain and spinal cord, skin, or gums.

They can form tumors in other parts of the body.

When AML is diagnosed, you'll get a new doctor who specializes in and has experience treating childhood leukemia.

He or she will be part of a care team that will get treatment started as soon as possible.

There are several types of AML.

Your doctor will come up with a specific treatment plan for your child's body and the type of AML.

Treatment can include chemotherapy, other medicines, radiation, or a stem cell transplant.

It can also be a combination of any of these things.

Treating this type of leukemia may take more than 6 months.

Many children respond right away...

Others need more time...

or the leukemia comes back.

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Then other treatments may be needed.

Your doctor may talk to you about clinical trials.

Learning that your child has leukemia can feel like an ending.

But it's just the beginning of a journey...

one that many families have been on.

And most kids get better.

You don't have to do it alone.

Your cancer care team is there to treat your child and to support your family.

But what your child needs just as much as medical care...

is your love and hope.