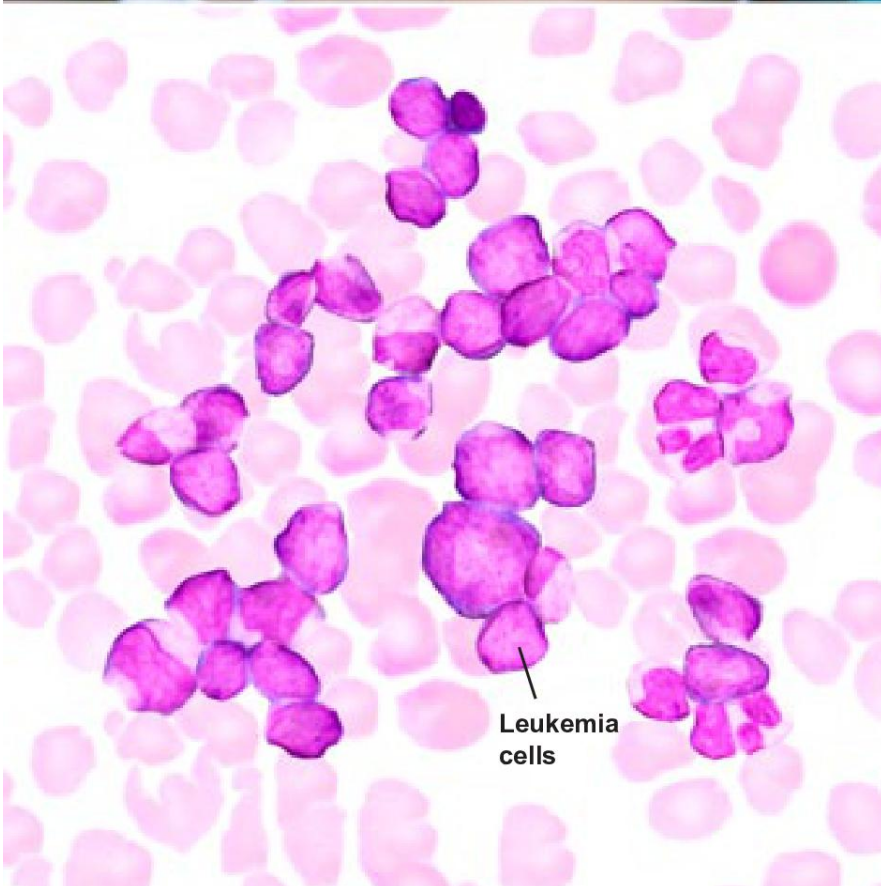




## Leukemia



### Overview

This is a cancer of the blood cells. Commonly it involves your white blood cells, but leukemia can also affect red blood cells and platelets. Leukemia results in abnormal blood cells that don't work properly.

### Causes and Risk Factors

The cause of leukemia is not fully understood. Cancer develops because of a mutation in a cell's DNA. This is the genetic blueprint for your body's cells. A mutation can cause your blood cells to grow and divide rapidly and uncontrollably. These abnormal cells may begin to crowd out other healthy cells in your bloodstream. Your risk for leukemia is higher if you have had chemotherapy or radiation therapy. It is higher if you have been exposed to certain chemicals, if you are a smoker or if you have a family history of the disease.

### Types

There are many types of leukemia. They are classified by the type of cells involved and the way the cancer progresses in your body. Some types of leukemia are more common in children, and some are more common in adults. Lab tests can help determine your specific type.

### Symptoms

Symptoms of leukemia include fever, chills and fatigue. You may feel pain in your bones. You may lose weight. You may have frequent infections. You may bleed and bruise easily. Your lymph nodes may swell, and you may sweat a lot.

### Treatment

Treatment options include chemotherapy and radiation therapy. You may benefit from biological therapy or targeted therapy. You may benefit from a stem cell transplant. Your healthcare provider can create a care plan that is right for your needs.