

Acute Myeloid Leukemia Fact Sheet

What is AML?

- Acute Myeloid Leukemia, or AML, is a cancer that typically forms in the bone marrow from cells that are meant to grow into different kinds of blood cells.
- In people with AML, the disease usually starts in immature cells called “blasts” that grow and divide quickly, forming a multitude of abnormal cells. A build-up of these abnormal cells occurs, eventually crowding out healthy blood cells.¹
- AML, like many blood cancers, is complex and actually a group of many diseases distinguished by:
 - Cell type ²
 - Chromosomal rearrangements ²
 - Genetic mutations ²
- Classification of AML continues to evolve based on our understanding of disease biology.

What is the impact of AML?

- AML initially develops in the bone marrow, but often moves into the blood and may sometimes spread to other parts of the body; such as the lymph nodes, liver, spleen, central nervous center, and testicles.³
- It is the most common type of aggressive leukemia in adults.⁴
- An estimated 20,000 people are expected to be diagnosed with AML in the U.S. in 2018.⁴
- AML generally affects older adults, and has the lowest survival rate of all leukemias, 68 is the average age of diagnosis and there is a 27 percent 5-year survival rate.^{5, 6}

What are the symptoms of AML?

- Signs and symptoms of AML can vary between people. These symptoms may be seen in other conditions as well. Only a doctor will be able to tell if the symptoms are related to AML.⁷
 - Weight loss ⁷
 - Fatigue ⁷
 - Fever ⁷
 - Night sweats ⁷
 - Loss of appetite ⁷
 - Infections ⁷
 - Easy bruising or bleeding ⁷
- Many signs and symptoms of AML are caused by abnormally low numbers of healthy blood cells.

How is AML treated?

- For this aggressive disease, doctors typically begin treatment as soon as possible after diagnosis. Currently treatment options for AML may include:
 - Chemotherapy ⁸
 - Stem cell transplant ⁸
 - Radiation ⁸
 - Targeted therapies ⁸
 - Transfusions can help restore the level of these blood cells are common in people with this disease.⁸

To learn more about the most common types of blood cancers and what makes them unique, visit our [video](#) on the Diversity of Blood Cancers.

- ¹ American Cancer Society. How Is Acute Myeloid Leukemia Diagnosed?
<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/acute-myeloid-leukemia/about/new-research.html>. Accessed July 30, 2018.
- ² National Cancer Institute. Adult Acute Myeloid Leukemia Treatment (PDQ®)—Health Professional Version.
https://www.cancer.gov/types/leukemia/hp/adult-aml-treatment-pdq#section/_9. Accessed on August 2, 2018.
- ³ American Cancer Society. Acute Myeloid Leukemia Early Detection, Diagnosis, And Types
<https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/CRC/PDF/Public/8676.00.pdf> Accessed October 16, 2018.
- ⁴ National Cancer Institute. Adult Acute Myeloid Leukemia Treatment (PDQ®)—Health Professional Version.
<https://www.cancer.gov/types/leukemia/hp/adult-aml-treatment-pdq>. Accessed on August 2, 2018.
- ⁵ American Cancer Society. Cancer Facts and Figures.
<https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/research/cancer-facts-and-statistics/annual-cancer-facts-and-figures/2018/cancer-facts-and-figures-2018.pdf>. Accessed August 3, 2018.
- ⁶ National Cancer Institute. SEER Cancer Statistics Factsheets. Cancer Stat Facts: Leukemia - Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML). <https://seer.cancer.gov/statfacts/html/amyl.html>. Accessed on August 2, 2018.
- ⁷ American Cancer Society. Signs and Symptoms of Acute Myeloid Leukemia.
<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/acute-myeloid-leukemia/detection-diagnosis-staging/signs-symptoms.html>. Accessed July 30, 2018.
- ⁸ National Cancer Institute. Adult Acute Myeloid Leukemia Treatment (PDQ®)—Health Professional Version.
https://www.cancer.gov/types/leukemia/hp/adult-aml-treatment-pdq#section/_46. Accessed on August 2, 2018.