What is CLL?

Leukemia is a type of cancer found in the blood and bone marrow and is caused by the rapid production of abnormal white blood cells.\(^1\)

In CLL, cancerous cells crowd the blood and bone marrow leaving less room for healthy white blood cells, red blood cells, and platelets. This can lead to infection, anemia and bleeding.\(^2\)

Compared to CLL, where most cancer cells are found in the blood and bone marrow, small lymphocytic lymphoma (SLL) cancer cells are mostly concentrated in the lymph nodes.\(^3\)

The majority of CLL patients have multiple concurrent health conditions (eg, hypertension, heart disease, diabetes), though disease progression and CLL-related complications including infections and second cancers are the primary causes of death.\(^4\)

There are two different types of CLL. The slower-growing type can remain stable for years and may not require immediate treatment. The faster-growing type is more aggressive and may need to be treated quickly.\(^5\)

Understanding Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia (CLL)

CLL Fast Facts

CLL is the most common type of leukemia in adults, with an estimated 20,160 new cases in the US in 2022.\(^6,7\)

Men are nearly twice as likely to have CLL than women.\(^8\)

The average age at time of diagnosis is approximately 70 years.\(^9\)

Many patients do not have any symptoms upon diagnosis. CLL is often found in blood tests for unrelated health problems or during a routine check-up.\(^10\)

Though the survival rate for patients varies based on the stage of the disease at diagnosis, the 5-year survival rate for CLL patients is approximately 87%.\(^7,9\)

Common Symptoms*

Generally, CLL symptoms develop over time. As the disease progresses, a person may experience\(^10,11\):

- **Fever and night sweats**
- **Swollen lymph nodes**
- **Weakness and fatigue**
- **Stomach pain**
- **Infections** (skin, lungs, kidneys or other sites)
- **Weight loss**

*Symptoms are non-specific and could arise from other less serious conditions.

References