

BLOOD Cancers

**: EVERY DAY, 31 PEOPLE
: IN AUSTRALIA ARE
: DIAGNOSED WITH
: BLOOD CANCERS.
: THEY AFFECT MEN
: AND WOMEN IN
: EQUAL NUMBERS.**

Blood cancers are a group of diseases characterised by uncontrolled growth of abnormal blood cells produced in the bone marrow. They consist of leukaemias, lymphomas, multiple myeloma, myeloproliferative disorder, and myelodysplastic syndrome.

Symptoms of blood cancers include increased tiredness, weight loss, fevers, night sweats, bruising and bleeding, recurrent infections, shortness of breath and bone pain.

DIFFERENT KINDS OF BLOOD CANCERS

Leukaemia starts in the bone marrow where developing blood cells, usually white cells, undergo a malignant change. The cells multiply in an uncontrolled way and crowd the marrow, affecting the body's ability to make normal blood cells.

Lymphomas are a type of blood cancer that affects the lymphatic system, which consists of lymph glands, liver, spleen, and bone marrow. There are many types of lymphoma, some very slow growing and others growing rapidly.

Multiple Myeloma is a cancer of the bone marrow. As it grows, it affects bone marrow function, damages the bones and causes increased risk of infection.

Myeloproliferative disorders are a group of diseases where the bone marrow overproduces one or more types of blood cells (red, white or platelets). Treatment depends on the type of excessive blood cell.

Myelodysplastic syndromes (MDS) are a group of diseases that affect normal blood cell production in the bone marrow. It normally presents with anaemia and many people require regular blood transfusions.

TREATMENT

Treatment for a blood cancer or a related blood disorder depends on several factors, including the type of disease, how fast it is growing, whether it has spread and a person's general health. Treatments can range from monitoring, to chemotherapy, radiotherapy, stem cell therapy, biological treatments, blood cell replacement and bone marrow transplantation.

MORE INFORMATION
www.cancercouncil.org
www.leukaemia.org.au