

Acute megakaryoblastic leukaemia (AMKL)

Acute megakaryoblastic leukaemia (AMKL) is a fast-growing blood cancer. It is a rare type of acute myeloid leukaemia (AML). AMKL develops when blood-forming cells called megakaryocytes divide and mature uncontrollably. They build up in your bone marrow and stop it making enough healthy blood cells.

AMKL is very rare. It can affect people of any age.

- Children with Down's syndrome have a higher chance of getting AMKL than other people. But it is still very rare.
- AMKL can also affect children without Down's syndrome, but this is less likely.
- AMKL is even rarer in adults.

We do not know the exact cause of AMKL, but it is not because of anything you have or have not done.

The signs and symptoms of AMKL include:



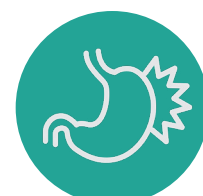
**Frequent
infections**



**Low red blood cell
count (anaemia)**



**Bleeding or
bruising**



**Swollen spleen
or liver**



**Swollen
lymph nodes**



**Extreme
tiredness**



Night sweats



Pale skin

AMKL is usually diagnosed from blood tests and bone marrow tests.

Treating AMKL

Treatment for AMKL varies from person to person. There is no standard approach and different doctors might use different options.

Your haematology team will suggest the most suitable option for you. They should explain what the treatment is, how you have it and what you can expect from it.

- Children with Down's syndrome are likely to have a combination of chemotherapy medicines. They often respond well and may not need further treatment.
- Adults and children without Down's syndrome usually have chemotherapy as their first treatment. But they may also need a stem cell transplant.
- Your team might suggest treatment as part of a clinical trial, if there is one suitable for you. This could let you access treatments that would not otherwise be available. It is your choice whether or not to take part.

Chemotherapy for AMKL happens in cycles or phases. You have different medicines at different times, with rest days in between. You usually stay in hospital. Your team can tell you what will happen for you.

A stem cell transplant replaces damaged or abnormal blood-forming cells with healthy ones. These are usually from a donor, sometimes a family member. A stem cell transplant is intensive, and you usually stay in hospital for several weeks. It is not suitable for everyone.

It can be hard dealing with treatment and its side effects. Don't be afraid to ask for help from family, friends, your medical team or Leukaemia Care.

The outcome of AMKL varies from person to person. Your medical team are best placed to discuss what they expect for you.

AMKL is a subtype of AML. For [more information about AML](#), follow the link or scan the QR code. Or search 'AML' at www.leukaemiacare.org.uk. This also includes links to order free information in print.



Need help? We offer a range of [support services](#). To find out more, scan the QR code, click the link or search 'support for you' at leukaemiacare.org.uk



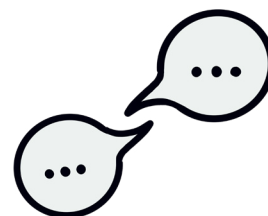
Want to talk?

Call our freephone helpline on **08088 010 444**

Message us on WhatsApp at **07500 068065**

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Patient Information Forum

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