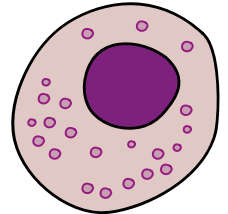


### What is ANKL?

Aggressive natural killer cell leukaemia (ANKL) is a fast-growing blood cancer. ANKL develops when white blood cells called natural killer (NK) cells become abnormal and divide uncontrollably. The abnormal cells build up in your lymph nodes, liver, spleen and bloodstream.

ANKL is a very rare leukaemia. It can affect people of any age but it's most common in people between 30 and 50.

Natural killer cells



We do not know the exact cause of ANKL. It is not because of anything you have or have not done.

Having an infection called Epstein Barr virus (EBV) can increase your chance of getting ANKL. But most people who've had EBV do **not** get ANKL. ANKL itself is not infectious. You cannot catch it and you cannot pass it on to someone else.

ANKL can cause the following signs and symptoms:



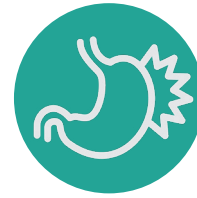
Fever



Night sweats



Losing weight without trying to



Tummy pain or bloating



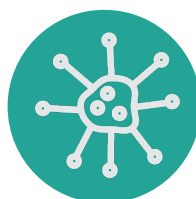
Swollen lymph nodes



Serious bleeding or clotting problems



Yellowing of your skin or the whites of your eyes (this may look different on black or brown skin)



Infections that last a long time or keep coming back



Feeling tired, breathless or dizzy



Bruising or bleeding easily

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

## Treating ANKL

ANKL is very rare, so there are no definite treatment guidelines.

Different doctors might use different approaches.

Your haematology team will explain what treatment they recommend and what you can expect from it. Options include:

- **Chemotherapy.** Chemotherapy medicines kill cells that are dividing rapidly, such as blood cells. You'll probably have a combination of chemotherapy medicines, including one called L-asparaginase.
- **Treatment as part of a clinical trial.** If there is one suitable for you, your team should explain what it involves and the risks and benefits of it.
- **A stem cell transplant.** This is very intensive and only suitable for people fit enough to have it. Your team might recommend a stem cell transplant if you respond well to your first treatment, to try and stop ANKL coming back.

You will also have medicine to prevent or treat symptoms or side effects. You may also have medicine to manage serious complications.

This information is aimed at people in the UK. We do our best to make sure it is accurate and up to date but it should not replace advice or guidance from your health professional.

For [more information about ANKL](#), follow the link. Or search 'ANKL' at [www.leukaemiacare.org.uk](http://www.leukaemiacare.org.uk) or scan the QR code. 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](http://leukaemiacare.org.uk)



## Want to talk about ANKL?

- Call our freephone helpline on **08088 010 444** (weekdays 9am to 4.30pm)
- Send a WhatsApp to **07500 068065** (weekdays 9am to 5pm)
- Visit [www.leukaemiacare.org.uk](http://www.leukaemiacare.org.uk)
- Email [support@leukaemiacare.org.uk](mailto:support@leukaemiacare.org.uk)

If you have any feedback or you'd like a list of the sources we used for this factsheet, please get in touch. Email [information@leukaemiacare.org.uk](mailto:information@leukaemiacare.org.uk) or call **08088 010 444**. Or complete our [short survey](#) to let us know what we can improve.



Version: 1    Reviewed: 08/2025    Next review: 08/2028

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