

Re: Dying of leukemia – any hope?

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.med.diseases.cancer/2004-07/0147.html>

From: Larry (Larry_at_nospam.net)

Date: 07/13/04

Date: Tue, 13 Jul 2004 09:34:21 -0400

Robert,

I am not a doctor, nor a leukemia expert. Others on this list seem to feel that pursuing alternatives would not be productive. I do not know. But my attitude is that it can't possibly do any harm to get a 2nd opinion (other than the cost). It may confirm what others have said here (and what her doctor says), it may bring up new possibilities (and then it will be your decision as to whether you feel it is worthwhile to pursue them, based on the risk and pros/cons). But I just feel that if you don't go for a 2nd opinion, you will never know ... and it's a worthwhile way (when it comes to life and death decisions) to be sure you are doing the right thing.

What you see on the John's Hopkins website is probably standard ... they don't want you calling them and asking them for advice over the phone. Go directly to the hematology–oncology dept and tell whomever picks up that your Mom is not able to travel ... ask if there is an expert on AML who would be willing to do a phone consult if the right history and test results were sent. Sloan would be another good choice (I was trying to pick centers closer to WV), and so would NY Hospital/Weill Cornell, MD Anderson (Texas), and Univ of Arkansas at Little Rock. Cancer Treatment Centers of America? That wouldn't be one of my first choices, but that is up to you.

Larry E.

Robert wrote:

> *Larry,*
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> *I was thinking of a second opinion. Would there be any point? My*
> *sister-in-law stresses that the doctor here is very good and the problem is*
> *mom's age. She has AML. Not sure the names of those drugs and they're not*
> *answering the phone right now for some reason. She might be able to travel*
> *if she doesn't get any worse. A consultation over the phone would be ideal*
> *as it wouldn't be as disruptive and it wouldn't be as regrettable if it didn*

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> 't lead to anything. I notice on the Johns Hopkins website that it says
> that they don't give medical advice over the phone. But I will bring the
> second opinion idea up again tomorrow.
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> What do you think of Memorial Sloan–Kettering, M.D. Anderson, Cancer
> Treatment Centers of America?
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> Thanks for posting.
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> Robert
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> "Larry" <Larry@nospam.net> wrote in message
> news:ccv7e8\$ffs\$1@news.btv.ibm.com...
>
>>Robert,
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>>Very hard to say without knowing many more details such as the exact
>>type of leukemia, her test results, and the exact drugs that she has
>>been treated with thus far.
>>
>>My advice to you is to seek out another expert and get a 2nd opinion. If
>>she cannot travel, some hem–oncs will do a consultation over the phone
>>... but you'll have to get copies of all her medical records and send
>>them off to the 2nd opinion doc. Try to find a good hem–onc who
>>specializes in leukemia only at a major medical institution such as
>>Emory or Johns Hopkins.
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>>Larry E.
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>>Robert wrote:
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>>>My mother was diagnosed with leukemia in September 2002 at the age of
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> 71.
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>>>She had chemo and the leukemia went into remission for 14 months. As I
>>>understand it, the second chemo made her too sick and the newer drug
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> they
>
>>>tried didn't work. The doctor sent her home saying there was nothing

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> *more*
>
>>>*he could do. She is not too well, although she can get up and walk*
>
> *around.*
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>>>*She has to go to the doctor every day. She takes antibiotics and some*
>
> *other*
>
>>>*pills too, I think. My understanding is that further treatment would*
>
> *likely*
>
>>>*kill her so they're just going to try to keep her alive as long as*
>
> *possible*
>
>>>*and as comfortable as possible. She is now 72. Her doctor is very*
>>>*distinguished in the field. She is in West Virginia.*
>>>
>>>*Do we have to give up?*
>>>
>>>*Robert*
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