



The Training Brief

Quick Reference mini-training Topics

Leukemia

The purpose of this training topic is to understand the signs and symptoms of Leukemia. Firefighters have a 1.14 times greater risk of Leukemia than the general public.

Discussion

Fact: Firefighters have a 1.14 times greater risk of developing Leukemia than the general public.

Key Points: A 2006 meta-analysis by Grace LeMasters of 32 firefighter cancer studies their team found that, compared with the general population, a 14% increased risk of Leukemia than general public.

NIOSH conducted a study of 30,000 firefighters and occupational cancer. The results were a 9% higher chance of firefighters being diagnosed with cancer than the general public and a 14% higher rate of dying from cancer than the general public.

It cannot be understated about the importance of annual medical exams.

You can download a medical form from our website that highlights the needed medical tests to be done if you're a firefighter.

https://firefightercancersupport.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Primary-care-cancer-evaluations-for-firefighters_HamrockMD_2016_FCSN.pdf

Action: Download and print the form. Bring it to your primary care physician. Discuss the risks firefighters have in regards to occupational cancer.

Make the necessary changes

Leukemias are cancers that start in cells that would normally develop into different types of blood cells. Most often, leukemia starts in early forms of white blood cells, but some leukemias start in other blood cell types.

Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia (ALL): It starts in the bone marrow where blood cells are made. It is more common in children than in adults.

Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML): starts in the bone marrow (the soft inner part of certain bones, where new blood cells are made), but most often it quickly moves into the blood, as well. It can sometimes spread to other parts of the body including the lymph nodes, liver, spleen, central nervous system (brain and spinal cord), and testicles.

Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia (CLL): Chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL) is a type of cancer that starts in white blood cells (called lymphocytes) in the bone marrow.

Chronic Myeloid Leukemia (CML): Chronic myeloid leukemia (CML) is also known as chronic myelogenous leukemia. It's a type of cancer that starts in the blood-forming cells of the bone marrow and invades the blood.

Chronic Myelomonocytic Leukemia (CMML): Chronic myelomonocytic leukemia (CMML) is a type of cancer that starts in blood-forming cells of the bone marrow and invades the blood.

Signs and Symptoms:

- Easy bruising
- Severe Infections that don't go away or comeback
- Anemia
- Weight loss
- Fever
- Loss of appetite
- Weakness
- Night sweats
- Bone pain
- Enlarged spleen
- Belly "Fullness" or pain
- Feeling full after eating small amounts of food
- Feeling tired
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Dizziness/lightheaded
- Bleeding, such as frequent or severe nosebleeds, bleeding gums, or heavy menstrual bleeding in women

Source: American Cancer Society: <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/leukemia.html>