

**Conclusion:** In this study, PET caused a change of therapy in 44%. FDG-PET has great potential in the assessment of tumour response to combined radio-/chemotherapy and is superior to CIM for this purpose.

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POSTER

# **High-dose chemotherapy with autologous stem-cell rescue in children with high-risk medulloblastoma/PNET.**

N. Konoplya, U. Strongin, O. Aleynikova. *Belorussian Center for Paediatric Oncology and HAE For elder children, Minsk, Belarus*

**Purpose:** To determine the efficacy of treatment of high-risk medulloblastoma/PNET Children with high-dose chemotherapy (HDCT) and PBSC.

**Patients and methods:** 44 patients with high-risk medulloblastoma/PNET (unresectable tumor, brain stem involved, CNS metastasis, age less 3 years) were treated with four sequential courses of chemotherapy (cisplatin or carboplatin, cyclophosphamide, etoposide and vincristine). PBSC harvesting was performed after last course of chemotherapy. Then children were randomized to receive or not HDCT consisting of thiotepa 150 mg/m<sup>2</sup> – 8-7-6-5, carboplatin 500 mg/m<sup>2</sup> – 8-7-6-5, etoposide 250 mg/m<sup>2</sup> – 8-7-6-5. Craniospinal radiotherapy was performed after cessation chemotherapy to all children more than 3 years old.

**Results:** 4-year PFS for all patients was 56%. PFS for children received HDCT was 61±0.15 in compare of 45±0.09 for those who did not. There were no transplanted related deaths.

**Conclusion:** Patients with high-risk medulloblastoma/PNET may benefit from treatment approach including HDCT with condition thiotepa, carboplatin, etoposide. The toxicity of this regimen was tolerable.

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# **Clinical characteristics of large cell lymphomas in childhood**

M. Büyükpamukcu<sup>1</sup>, Y. Köksal<sup>1</sup>, M. Caglar<sup>2</sup>, B. Yalcin<sup>1</sup>, A. Varan<sup>1</sup>, T. Kutluk<sup>1</sup>, C. Akuz<sup>1</sup>. <sup>1</sup>Hacettepe University Institute of Oncology, Pediatric Oncology, Ankara, Turkey; <sup>2</sup>Hacettepe University Faculty of Medicine, Pediatric Pathology, Ankara, Turkey

**Background:** Large cell lymphoma (LCL) represents 15–30% of childhood non-Hodgkin lymphomas. Like other childhood lymphomas, LCLs are highly chemosensitive tumors. We aimed to determine clinical characteristics and treatment results of our cases with LCL.

**Patients and methods:** We reviewed the records of 24 children with LCL treated and followed at Hacettepe University Institute of Oncology, Department of Pediatric Oncology between January 1993 and December 2004. Data regarding age, gender, presenting features, results of radiological and other laboratory studies, histopathology, disease stages, treatment modalities, and outcome of patients were recorded from hospital charts. Patients were staged according to Murphy's system and treated depending on disease stage with modified 'lymphoma malign B' (LMB-89) and 'lymphoma malign T' (LMT-89) chemotherapy regimens.

**Results:** In this 12-year period, among 314 non-Hodgkin lymphoma cases, 24 were diagnosed as LCL (7.6%); 14 were boys and 10 girls. The median age for all cases was 8.5 years (range, 1.25–17) and 7 were younger than 5 years. Eight patients (33%) had anaplastic large cell lymphoma (ALCL). Eighteen cases (75%) had advanced disease (stages III and IV) and 6 had localized disease. Nodal disease was present in 17 patients (70.8%), extra-nodal disease in 15/24 (62.5%). Common extra-nodal sites were soft tissues (6/24), skin (4/24), kidneys (4/24), central nervous system (3/24) and ovaries (2/24). In 3 patients, bone marrow involvement was detected. Five of 8 patients with ALCL had T-cell lineage disease and 8 other patients had disease of B-cell lineage. For all patients, overall survival (OS) and event-free survival rates were 66.6% and 55.3%, respectively. Overall survival rates for ALCL and other LCLs were 66.3% and 61.3%, respectively. Four patients with LDH levels <500 IU/L are alive with no disease at a median follow-up of 32.4 months. Overall survival rate of the patients with higher LDH levels (>500 IU/L) was 60.7%. In localized and advanced disease, OS rates were 83.3% and 60.4% (p=0.48), respectively. The OS rates for cases ≤5 years and older cases were 28.5% and 81.4% (p=0.07), respectively.

**Conclusions:** Compared to other common NHLs in childhood, LCLs frequently present with nodal disease. Although not significant, survival rates were better in cases older than 5 years and in those with LDH <500 IU/L. We need more novel treatment approaches such as immunotherapy with more intensive chemotherapy to improve survival rates, especially in younger cases with advanced disease and LDH >500 IU/L.

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# **An analysis of prognostic factors and the five year survival rate in childhood acute lymphoblastic leukaemia**

M. Mariam Faiz<sup>1</sup>, Q. Qazi Javed Iqbal<sup>2</sup>, A. Asif Qureshi<sup>3</sup>, S. Saeeda Asghar<sup>4</sup>. <sup>1</sup>Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Oncology, Clinical Pathology, Lahore, Pakistan; <sup>2</sup>University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan; <sup>3</sup>Government College Science, Lahore, Pakistan; <sup>4</sup>Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Oncology, Lahore, Pakistan

**Background:** Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia (ALL) is the most common malignancy in childhood. With newer drug protocols the five year survival rate is now close to 80%. Various factors have been reported to be important for prognosis and should be considered at the time of planning treatment. A prospective study was designed to evaluate the prognostic factors and response to treatment in newly diagnosed paediatric acute lymphoblastic leukaemia patients. This study was started in 1998 and preliminary results complied in 2004.

**Materials and methods:** A total of 105 patients were recruited into the study. The patients were stratified prognostically into good risk, poor risk and intermediate risk on the basis of age, sex white cell blood count at presentation and disease bulk. All patients received standard treatment consisting of induction (vincristine, prednisolone, daunorubicin, IT Methotrexate, L-Asparaginase), consolidation on week five (vincristine, prednisolone, daunorubicin, cytosine arabinoside, thioguanone, prednisolone, IT methotrexate) CNS radiation followed by maintenance therapy with monthly vincristine, daily mercaptopurine, weekly oral methotrexate, prednisolone 5 days a month All patients received late intensification (same drugs as consolidation) on month five of induction.

**Results:** By December 2003, 34.3% of the patients were alive in remission, 23% of the patients died due to relapse or infection during follow up. Forty five patients failed to comply with the treatment protocol and lost to follow up. Among all the variables a worse prognosis was associated (p<0.05) with WBC counts greater than 50,000/ml at presentation and relapse in the bone marrow. The high number of drop outs and factors that might have account for a poorer prognosis included the difficult access to medical care, poor nutrition, decreased compliance of families due to exhausted economic and psychological reserves and inadequate knowledge about the disease course and treatment.

**Conclusion:** We conclude that most of our patients present late for treatment and have bulky disease at presentation. The above treatment was effective in our patients. Treatment related morbidity and mortality is predictable and controllable. However, further diagnostic risk group stratification is required like immunophenotyping, cytogenetics and molecular studies to classify these patients. This will help to achieve a stratified treatment approach for various risk groups based on known clinical and genetic features that play a critical role in directing therapy for ALL.

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POSTER

# **Treatment results for B-cell non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma and leukemia using BFM protocols with reduced MTX to 2 g/m<sup>2</sup>: a single institution experience**

L. Krivokapic Dokmanovic, D. Janic, N. Jovanovic. *University Children's Hospital, Hematooncology, Belgrade, Serbia*

**Objective:** To evaluate the results achieved in children with B-cell non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and leukemia (B-NHL and B-ALL) treated according to protocols Berlin-Frankfurt-Munster-90 and 95 (BFM-90 and BFM-95).

**Methods:** Forty four children (41 with B-NHL and 3 with B-ALL) admitted to our hospital between January 1993 and January 2005. were evaluated. Patients were staged according to the BFM protocol. Due to inability to determine plasma MTX levels, HD-MTX was reduced from 5 to 2 g/m<sup>2</sup>.

**Results:** There were 33 boys and 11 girls median age 8 years (range 3–17). Primary site for children with B-NHL was the abdomen (30), head and neck (11) and other (3). Three had B-ALL. Based on BFM therapy group staging classification at diagnosis: therapy group R1 (1), R2 (13), R3 (16) and R4 (14). None of the patients had cerebrospinal fluid involvement. Treatment protocols were BFM-90 (10) and BFM-95 (34). All patients entered complete remission. No toxic death was seen. Two patients relapsed and died. One was HIV positive and showed aggressive behaviour after relapse. Second relapsed three months after therapy in bone marrow, after four months of second line therapy did not achieve remission and stop therapy. Forty two patients (95.45%) are alive and disease free, with median follow up 47 months.

**Conclusions:** These results of our group of B-NHL/B-ALL can be considered satisfactory despite reduction of MTX dosage from 5 to 2 g/m<sup>2</sup>.