



LEUKEMIA: A BEST FRIEND'S PERSPECTIVE

Leukemia is the second most common blood cancer, with 352,000 new cases worldwide in 2012.^{1,2} It typically occurs when immature white blood cells do not develop or work the way they should and crowd out healthy cells in the bone marrow.^{3,4} Prognosis and treatment of leukemia depend on the form, or subtype, of the disease.^{3,4} Leukemia occurs most often in adults older than 55, but it is also the most common cancer in children younger than 15.³ My best friend was diagnosed with leukemia a few months ago.



8AM: COFFEE RUN



Over the years, my best friend and I always alternated getting coffee for each other, but now we do that every other day, since he had to cut back to part-time work.⁵



10AM: MORNING BREAK



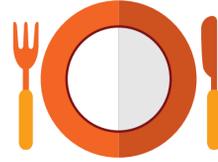
My friend takes a short break to take his medications and vitamins. Sometimes he has a doctor's appointment, and I drive him if he needs me to.⁶



12PM: BREAKING A SWEAT

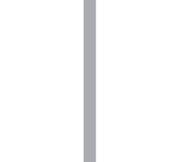


We take a yoga class three times a week.^{4,7}



1PM: LUNCHTIME

I notice he eats less than he used to.^{4,6}



2PM: NAPTIME

My friend has been able to re-organize his work day so he can nap each afternoon to help him re-charge.⁷



4PM: SNACKTIME

Having small meals throughout the day can help my friend to get the nourishment he needs.^{4,7}



6PM: SOCIAL HOUR

We meet with friends after work if he's not too tired. Our group provides emotional support.⁶



7PM: DINNER TIME

Once a week we have a boys' night out. This gives his wife, who cares for him most nights, an evening to herself.



8PM: NIGHTLY PHONE CALL



I do one last check in to make sure he's ok and let him know I care.⁶

This is an example of a day in the life of a friend of a person living with leukemia. The patient and friends perspectives may vary.

The Blood Cancer Community is bound together by blood to reach one common goal: to improve the lives of people impacted by blood cancer. Continued collaboration of patients, caregivers, healthcare providers, advocates, academics and researchers is critical to fulfilling this goal.

REFERENCES

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