

Patient Story 4: (Sheryl Chadwick)



1

- My son was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL) at the age of six. His protocol included 3 1/2 years of chemotherapy. During my son's induction phase, the goal was for him to go into remission (having less than 5% leukemia cells in his bone marrow) within 7 days.
- Unfortunately my son did not go into remission within the first week. He was tested again at 14 days, and he was still not in remission. My son finally went into remission at 28 days. Because it took so long for him to go into remission, his entire protocol was altered from a standard ALL treatment to a high risk augmented protocol which increased the chemotherapy dosages and frequencies for the entire 3 1/2 years of treatment.

Patient Story 4 (Cont.)

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- Throughout his treatment, he suffered from multiple side effects from having a suppressed immune system. He acquired invasive nasal fungus in two separate years that resulted in 17 nasal surgeries. The fungus also spread to his lungs and liver. He endured shingles many times as well as other viruses. He also experienced reflex sympathetic dystrophy.
- I have often wondered if there was a targeted treatment available that would have been designed specifically for him how much personal suffering could have been avoided.
- I hope that my son's difficult experience can contribute to initiatives that will help other children in the future that will be diagnosed with cancer. Additionally, I hope that patients and families will be given more education about the treatment choices that are available so they can make an informed decision about their health care.