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Survival with Chronic Myelogenous Leukemia: The Outcome of a Patient Who Had One of the Longest Survivals

Dear Sir,

Last year we reported in *Oncology* [1997;54:516] a patient having one of the longest survivals with chronic myelogenous leukemia (CML). The patient had been alive for 197 months after diagnosis when our letter was accepted for publication in March 1997. He was in the chronic phase of the disease on hydroxyurea therapy [1]. In the present letter, we report the clinical outcome of the patient.

A 67-year-old male was diagnosed as CML in November 1980. Philadelphia chromosome was positive at the time of diagnosis. The initial therapy was performed with busulfan in conventional doses and intervals and continued until May 1994. IFN- α was tried but unfortunately this therapy had to be discontinued because of poor tolerance and side effects. Next, treatment with hydroxyurea was given and continued until August 1997.

In June 1997, on follow-up examination, whole blood count revealed leukocytosis and anemia (white blood cells (WBC) 120,000/mm³ and hemoglobin 7 g/dl). Since peripheral blood smear and bone marrow examination were not concordant with the blastic phase, this progression was accepted as an accelerated phase of CML. Leukapheresis and erythrocyte transfusion were performed and hydroxyurea increased from 500 to 2,000 mg/day. Next, the hydroxyurea dose was reduced to 1,000 mg/day after the WBC count fell to <20,000/mm³. Two months later, the patient was hospitalized with fever, nausea, vomiting and coughing. WBC count was 28,700/mm³, hemoglobin 8.1 g/dl and platelet count 133,000/mm³. Repeated blood, throat, sputum and urine cultures were negative. Fever was controlled with empiric antimicrobial treatment. Five days after admission, acute respiratory dis-

tress suddenly developed. He failed to respond to emergency treatment and died due to respiratory arrest in August 1997.

202 months' survival (from November 1980 to August 1997) is one of the longest survivals among patients with CML. In fact, to the best of our knowledge, up until now only 1 patient with a 17-year survival has been reported by Salvagno et al. [2].

References

- 1 Özet A, Özet G, Çalışkaner Z, Kömürçü Ş, Arpacı F, Berk Ö: Survival with chronic myelogenous leukemia (letter). *Oncology* 1997;54:516.
- 2 Salvagno L, Soraru M, Leszl A, Koussis H, De Franchis G, Fiorentino MV: Prolonged survival (17 years) in a patient with chronic myelogenous leukemia after therapy for Hodgkin's disease. *Leuk Lymphoma* 1994;16:177-181.