

## [Leukemia - Chronic Myeloid - CML - Risk Factors](#) [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the [Cancer.Net Editorial Board](#) [2], 10/2015

**ON THIS PAGE:** You will find out more about the factors that increase the chance of developing this type of leukemia. To see other pages, use the menu on the side of your screen.

A risk factor is anything that increases a person's chance of developing cancer. Although risk factors often influence the development of cancer, most do not directly cause cancer. Some people with several risk factors never develop cancer, while others with no known risk factors do. However, knowing your risk factors and talking about them with your doctor may help you make more informed lifestyle and health care choices.

The cause of CML is not known, though researchers now understand how the disease develops from genetic changes in the myeloid cells. Environmental factors account for only a small number of CML diagnoses. And, family history does not appear to play a role in the development of CML.

The following factors may raise a person's risk of developing CML:

- **Age.** The average age of a person with CML is around 60 years. CML is uncommon in children and teens.
- **Radiation exposure.** More people who were long-term survivors of the 1945 atomic bombings in Japan were diagnosed with CML. In addition, radiation therapy for a condition called ankylosing spondylitis has been linked to CML. However, there is no proven link between CML and radiation therapy or chemotherapy given for other types of cancer or other diseases.

- **Gender.** Men are somewhat more likely to develop CML than women.

The [next section in this guide is Symptoms and Signs](#) [3] and it explains what body changes or medical problems this disease can cause. Or, use the menu on the side of your screen to choose another section to continue reading this guide.

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#### **Links**

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/leukemia-chronic-myeloid-cml/risk-factors>

[2] <http://www.cancer.net/about-us>

[3] <http://www.cancer.net/node/19110>