



## COMMENTARY

# Patients First: Navigating Asparaginase-Based Treatment in Young Adults With Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia

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## ABSTRACT

This CME/CE integrates real patient stories, current evidence, evolving guideline recommendations, and expert clinical experience to equip hematology/oncology clinicians with practical strategies for successful asparaginase-based therapy in young adults with acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL). The overarching goal is to improve outcomes for young adults with ALL through more consistent application of pediatric-inspired regimens, optimized asparaginase use, and comprehensive, patient-centered care. Leukemia experts synthesize the latest evidence on the efficacy and safety of asparaginase-based ALL treatment for young adults. Using a case-based approach, the curriculum provides structured guidance on mitigation, monitoring, and management of key asparaginase-related toxicities. Practical recommendations include therapeutic drug monitoring of asparaginase activity, detection of clinical and silent hypersensitivity reactions, and timely substitution of *Escherichia coli*-derived asparaginase with *Erwinia*-derived asparaginase to preserve therapeutic activity and efficacy after immune-mediated inactivation. Beyond treatment selection and toxicity management, the activity addresses system-level and psychosocial barriers that uniquely affect young adults with ALL, such as distance from specialty centers, employment and family responsibilities, lower rates of clinical trial participation, and survivorship concerns. To view this activity, and obtain CME/CE credit, click [here](#).

## 1 | Plain Language Abstract

- This educational program gives healthcare professionals practical tools and information they can use to improve survival and quality of life for young adults living with acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL), a type of blood cancer.
- In the program, real people describe their experiences with ALL. Many young adults with ALL face challenges related to transportation, job and family stress, mental health, and long-term wellness.
- Physician experts explain how treatment plans used for children with ALL can also help many young adults. These plans use a medicine called asparaginase along with other chemotherapy medicines. Research shows that these plans can often help young adults with ALL live longer than other kinds of treatment. However, asparaginase is not used very often, so many cancer doctors are not used to giving it. Because of this, some doctors prefer treatment plans that do not include asparaginase.
- The program reviews how to use asparaginase and how important it is for patients to continue using the medicine long enough for it to work well. It describes asparaginase side effects and how they can be safely managed. In some cases, switching to *Erwinia*-derived asparaginase can allow patients to continue with their therapy.

To view this activity, and obtain CME/CE credit, click [here](#).

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**Conflicts of Interest**

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**Data Availability Statement**

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as it describes a continuing medical education activity and no new data were generated or analyzed.