

# ADULT LYMPHOMA / LEUKEMIA T: PREVALENT ENTITY IN SOUTH AMERICA

LINFOMA/LEUCEMIA T DEL ADULTO: ENTIDAD PREVALENTE EN SUDAMÉRICA

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EDITORIAL

Adult T - lymphoma / leukemia is an aggressive T lymphoproliferative entity associated retrovirus HTLV-1 - T. HTLV-1 infection is endemic in Japan, the Caribbean, Africa, South America, and the Middle East. In South America, we have Peru, Brazil, Colombia and Chile.

Peru is endemic for this virus<sup>(1-3)</sup>. The prevalence of retroviruses in Europe and the USA. USA It is less than 1% but in Peru it is estimated that around 3% of the healthy adult population is a carrier of the retrovirus<sup>(4, 5)</sup>.

From Chile, there have been several ATLL reports since 1992 by Dra. Cabrera et al.<sup>(6, 7, 8)</sup>.

Other diseases caused by retroviruses include tropical spastic paraparesis, uveitis, infectious dermatitis, and other rheumatologic, psychiatric, and infectious disorders<sup>(9)</sup>.

Only 2% to 4% of virus carriers will develop ATLL<sup>(10)</sup>. The viral genes involved in the malignant transformation are Tax and HBZ<sup>(11, 12)</sup>.

Five clinical types are identified in this disease: latent, chronic, cutaneous, lymphomatous, and acute. However, the acute and lymphomatous forms are the most aggressive and also the most prevalent.

As to prognosis, the poor prognosis factors are: clinical stage, performance status, age, albumin, and soluble IL-2 receptor<sup>(13)</sup>.

The survival of the acute forms can be 2 months, while the lymphomatous forms can have a survival time of around 9 months.

Treatment for leukemic forms is Interferon alfa and zidovudine; the lymphomatous form responds to chemotherapy<sup>(14, 15)</sup>. Allogeneic transplantation may be the only curative form of the disease.

In this issue of the journal, a complete review of this entity is presented by Dra. Cabrera et al.

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