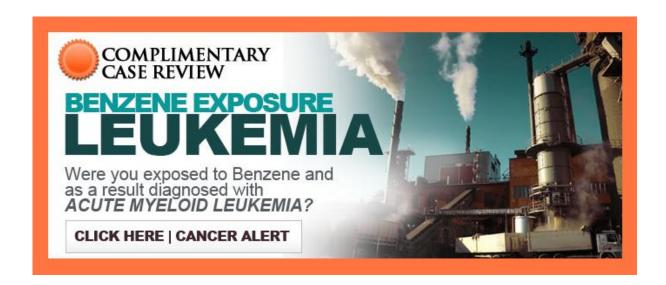
## Chemicals are known to cause serious injuries



## Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML) diagnosis: Were you exposed to benzene?

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A cancer diagnosis is perhaps one of the most devastating events a person can face. Amid the many questions is sure to be, "How did this happen? Why did I get cancer?" For patients diagnosed with Myelodysplastic Syndrome (MDS) or Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML), the answer might be benzene exposure.

Exposure to toxic chemicals, including benzene, is a risk factor for the development of MDS and AML. According to the MDS Foundation, "Long term exposure to certain environmental or industrial chemicals, such as benzene, can also trigger MDS."

Chemical exposure also is listed as a risk factor for the development of AML by the American Cancer Society, which reports, "long-term exposure to high levels of benzene is a risk factor for AML. Benzene is a solvent used in the rubber industry, oil refineries, chemical plants, shoe manufacturing, and gasoline-related industries, and is also found in cigarette smoke, gasoline and motor vehicle exhaust, and some glues, cleaning products, detergents, art supplies, and paints."

John Tomlinson, an attorney with Beasley Allen Law Firm, works with clients who are suffering from MDS or AML as the result of chronic exposure to toxins like benzene. He says most people don't immediately draw a connection between their cancer diagnosis and the toxic exposure.

"Unfortunately, in a number of cases I investigate the victim or the family of the deceased victim wait too long after the date of diagnosis or date of death to contact us about a potential connection between benzene and AML," Tomlinson says. "After a certain period of time, their right to bring a legal action in court is time-barred."

According to the MDS Foundation, MDS are a group of diverse bone marrow disorders in which the bone marrow does not produce enough healthy blood cells. MDS is often referred to as a "bone marrow failure disorder". MDS is primarily a disease of the elderly (most patients are older than age 65), but MDS can affect younger patients as well. For roughly 30 percent of the patients diagnosed with MDS, this type of bone marrow failure syndrome will progress to AML.

The National Cancer Institute describes AML as a type of cancer in which the bone marrow makes abnormal myeloblasts (a type of white blood cell), red blood cells, or platelets. Leukemia may affect red blood cells, white blood cells, and platelets. There are different subtypes of AML.

In the early stages of MDS, patients may not have any symptoms, but blood tests may reveal a reduced red cell count, sometimes with a reduced white cell count and/or reduced platelet counts. Signs and symptoms of adult AML include fever, feeling tired, and easy bruising or bleeding. Tests on the blood and bone marrow are used to diagnose AML.

If you have recently been diagnosed with MDS or AML and suspect toxic exposure to benzene may be to blame, it is important to talk with a lawyer to determine if you have a claim. Due to certain statutes of limitations for bringing a claim of this nature, it is important to contact an attorney as soon as possible if you believe your condition is a result of benzene exposure.

For more information on this subject, contact John Tomlinson at 334-269-2343 or <a href="mailto:John.Tomlinson@beasleyallen.com">John.Tomlinson@beasleyallen.com</a>. There is additional information at our website, <a href="mailto:www.benzene-exposure.com">www.benzene-exposure.com</a>.

Sources:

MDS Foundation

American Cancer Society

NIH National Cancer Institute

Free Legal Consultation