**Special Considerations for the Treatment of Children with Cancer**

Cancer in children and adolescents is rare, although the overall incidence has been slowly increasing since 1975.[1] Children and adolescents with cancer should be referred to medical centers that have a multidisciplinary team of cancer specialists with experience treating the cancers that occur during childhood and adolescence. This multidisciplinary team approach may incorporate the skills of the following health care professionals and others to ensure that children receive treatment, supportive care, and rehabilitation that will achieve optimal survival and quality of life:

* Primary care physicians.
* Pediatric surgeons.
* Pediatric liver transplant surgeons.
* Pediatric orthopedic surgeon experienced in bone tumors.
* Surgeons experienced with vascular tumors.
* Pediatric radiation oncologists.
* Pediatric medical oncologists and hematologists.
* Pediatric intensivists.
* Ophthalmologist with extensive experience in the treatment of children with retinoblastoma.
* Rehabilitation specialists.
* Pediatric nurse specialists.
* Social workers.
* Nutritionists.
* Child life professionals.
* Psychologists.
* Fertility specialists. (?)

For information about supportive care for children and adolescents with cancer, see the summaries on Supportive and Palliative Care.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has outlined guidelines for pediatric cancer centers and their role in the treatment of children and adolescents with cancer.[2] At these pediatric cancer centers, clinical trials are available for most types of cancer that occur in children and adolescents, and the opportunity to participate is offered to most patients and their families. Clinical trials for children and adolescents with cancer are generally designed to compare potentially better therapy with current standard therapy. Most of the progress made in identifying curative therapies for childhood cancers has been achieved through clinical trials. Information about ongoing clinical trials is available from the NCI website.