To the Editor:

The recent information on the secretion of tumor necrosis factor-α (TNF-α) by B-cell chronic lymphocytic leukemia (B-CLL) and by hairy cell leukemia (HCL) cells could also contribute to the better understanding of bone remodeling in these disorders. TNF-α, as well as the related cytokines TNFβ and interleukin-1β (IL-1β), have been shown to stimulate bone resorption. These factors are primarily the products of activated mononuclear cells. The chronic B-lymphoproliferative disorders CLL, HCL, and multiple myeloma (MM) differ from each other not only in the degree of cellular maturation and in the stage of cellular activation, but also in the frequency of bone involvement. Bone involvement is exceptional in CLL; some cases have been reported in HCL whereas it is a characteristic feature of MM. In contrast to MM, the lytic bone lesions of HCL patients are usually more localized and patients are characteristically normocalcaemic.

While TNF-β or IL-1 β were found to be the major bone resorbing...
cytokines in MM, the pathogenesis of bone involvement in the chronic B-cell leukemias is unknown. Nevertheless, interferon (IFN)-α has been shown to improve bone remodeling as well as to counteract pathologic bone changes in HCL. The cytokine(s) responsible for bone involvement in HCL seem to be sensitive to IFN-α. TNF-α is one of the candidates for this role.

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REFERENCES
Production of tumor necrosis factor-alpha by B-cell chronic lymphocytic leukemia and hairy cell leukemia cells: considerations regarding bone remodeling in the chronic B-cell leukemias [letter]

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