

Life of a Hematology Oncology Fellow-

[Please see sample schedule and curriculum.](#)

There is never a dull moment in the life of a fellow. The first year is hard work, sometimes grueling however you will be amazed how fast the year goes by and how much you have learned by the end of the year. There is little free time for reading or keeping up with your hobbies during the year. You will pretty much live in the hospital due to inpatient rotations such as Westwood consults, J (BMT service), SM Solid Oncology service, or VA inpatient.

Your day will typically begin at 7AM and the end time is variable due to call schedule or consults but it is usually around 5PM. You will have 1 half day of VA continuity clinic a week. Rounds generally start at 9AM after didactics or journal club on Tuesdays and Thursdays. After the attending finishes rounds, you are in charge of the service and making sure the plan gets implemented for all the patients. You will work with interns, residents, and sometimes Nurse Practitioners depending on the rotation. You will learn how to write chemotherapy orders and the nuances of each regimen and its toxicities and most of all learning how to care for an oncology patient. You will also have the responsibility to teach the residents or students on various topics in hematology and oncology. The oncology ward is the ideal place to learn the art of communication. You will have the opportunity to learn how to discuss important end of life, goals of care, and advanced care planning with patients.

During your second and third years, your day is much more relaxing. Some fellows even choose to get pregnant or have children during this time. As a senior fellow, you are free to pursue scholarly activities and actually have a life outside work. The time is mostly spent in either clinical or laboratory research. You will have 2 or 3 half-day clinics per week. Although the attending the primary oncologist, patients are familiar with you because they see you throughout their treatment course and view you as an important part of the team. You will care for your patients in clinic and take ownership of them. There are lots of time to read and learning opportunities and conferences to attend that you may not have had a chance to as a first year. This includes the various subspecialty tumor boards and Friday Hematology conference. You will continue to attend the mandatory didactics on Tuesdays followed by journal club on Thursdays. These well-designed lectures are arranged by monthly topics and are essential to learning as a fellow.

One of the joys of being a fellow at an academic institution such as UCLA is that each workday brings a different combination of patient care and research, both of which can be challenging and exciting! The time will soon pass by and times shared with your co-fellows will be memorable. Our fellows have been successful in finding the right job after fellowship. There is guidance and mentorship for career planning and development by the fellowship committee throughout all three years.