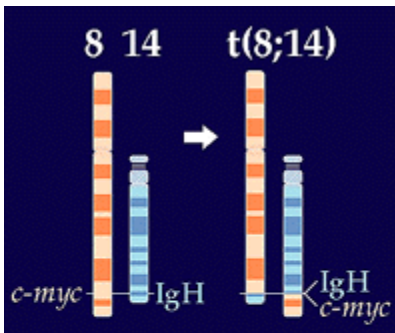




## Burkitt lymphoma



In Burkitt lymphoma, *Myc*, which is normally found on chromosome 8, is transferred to chromosome 14. This is known as chromosome translocation and can be characteristic of a cancer type. [image credit: Gregory Schuler, NCBI, NLM, NIH.]

Burkitt lymphoma is a rare form of cancer predominantly affecting young children in Central Africa, but the disease has also been reported in other areas. The form seen in Africa seems to be associated with infection by the Epstein-Barr virus, although the pathogenic mechanism is unclear.

Burkitt lymphoma results from chromosome translocations that involve the *Myc* gene. A chromosome translocation means that a chromosome is broken, which allows it to associate with parts of other chromosomes. The classic chromosome translocation in Burkitt lymphoma involves chromosome 8, the site of the *Myc* gene. This changes the pattern of *Myc*'s expression, thereby disrupting its usual function in controlling cell growth and proliferation.

We are still not sure what causes chromosome translocation. However, research in model organisms such as mice is leading us toward a better understanding of how translocations occur and, hopefully, how this process contributes to Burkitt lymphoma and other cancers such as leukemia.

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