



Understanding lymphoma

MARCELLE RUTH
CANCER CENTRE & SPECIALIST HOSPITAL

**The Marcelle Ruth Cancer Centre
& Specialist Hospital is the first
comprehensive healthcare centre of its
kind in Nigeria and indeed West Africa.**

> Our promise

In everything we do, we believe that compassion and care make all the difference.

With vast experience and understanding, our specialist team uses the very latest technology and treatments to deliver the best outcomes possible.

From screening and diagnosis to treatment and ongoing support, we are committed to providing outstanding care to those in need.

About this booklet

We understand it can be overwhelming for anyone to undergo cancer care, but we are here to provide you with help and support.

The focus of this leaflet is to help you and your family understand more about lymphoma.

Lymphoma

Lymphoma is cancer that begins in the infection-fighting cells of the immune system, called lymphocytes. These cells are in the lymph nodes, spleen, thymus, bone marrow and other parts of the body. In the case of lymphoma, lymphocytes change and grow out of control.

There are two main types of lymphoma:

- non-Hodgkin's: the most common type
- Hodgkin's.

Non-Hodgkin's and Hodgkin's lymphoma involve different types of lymphocyte cell. Every type of lymphoma grows at a different rate and responds differently to treatment.

Lymphoma is very treatable, and the outlook can vary depending on the type of lymphoma and its stage.

Causes

The exact cause is not known but risk factors include:

- age 60 or older for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- ages between 15 and 40 or older than 55 for Hodgkin lymphoma
- immunocompromised patients
- immune system disease such as rheumatoid arthritis, Sjogren's syndrome, lupus or coeliac disease
- infection with virus such as Epstein-Barr, hepatitis C or human T-cell leukaemia/lymphoma (HTLV-1)
- family history of lymphoma
- exposure to benzene or pesticides
- previous treatment for Hodgkin's or non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- exposure to radiation.

Symptoms

- Swollen lymph nodes
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Fever
- Night sweats
- Fatigue
- Weight loss
- Itching

Diagnosis

Bone marrow aspiration or biopsy

A needle is used to remove fluid or tissue from the bone marrow.

Chest X-ray

This will be done using low doses of radiation to make images of the chest.

MRI, CT and PET scans

Molecular test

Used to find changes to genes, proteins, and other substances in cancer cells to help figure out the type of lymphoma.

Blood tests

These check the number of certain cells, levels of other substances, or evidence of infection in the blood.

Treatment

Treatment depends on the type of lymphoma and its stage.

The main treatments for lymphoma are:

Chemotherapy

Chemotherapy uses drugs to kill cancer cells.

Radiation therapy

Radiation therapy uses high-energy rays to destroy cancer cells.

Immunotherapy

Immunotherapy uses the body's immune system to attack cancer cells.

Targeted therapy

targeted therapy targets aspects of lymphoma cells to curb their growth.

Stem cell transplant

Stem cell transplant, which can be either autologous (using the patient's stem cell) or allogeneic (using stem cells taken from a donor).

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