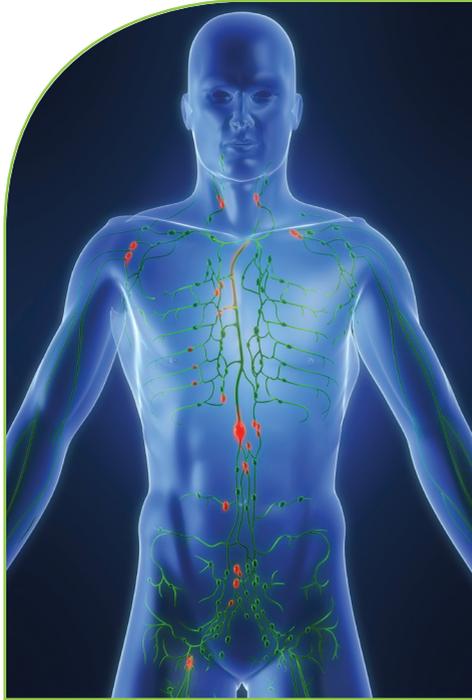




مركز الكويت لمكافحة السرطان
Kuwait Cancer Control Center

What is Lymphoma?



Developed in partnership with



An Educational Booklet for Patients

This information booklet can help you learn more about Lymphoma. A better understanding may give you a greater sense of control and help you work with your health care team to choose the best treatment and care for you.

What is Lymphoma?

Lymphoma is a general term for a variety of cancers of the lymphatic system, a vein like system carrying lymph fluid. The lymphatic system helps filter out bacteria and helps fight disease. The filter stations are called lymph nodes. These can grow when fighting infection (e.g. tonsillitis). In Lymphoma, some of the cells in the lymphatic system multiply uncontrollably (malignant). Lymphoma is determined by the type of cell that multiplies uncontrollably and how the cancer presents itself. The two main groups of Lymphoma are Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma and Hodgkin's Lymphoma.

Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma and Hodgkin's Lymphoma are NOT CONTAGIOUS and you CANNOT SPREAD your lymphoma to others.

What is Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma?

Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma is a malignant (cancerous) growth of B or T cells in the lymphatic system. There are 32 types of this lymphoma diagnosed by the type of cell growing abnormally.

What is Hodgkin's Lymphoma?

Hodgkin's Lymphoma is a malignant (cancerous) growth that starts in one area of the lymphatic system, usually a lymph node. The diagnosis is made when particular cells called the Reed Sternberg cells are found in the lump. If no treatment is given it can spread throughout the body.

What tests are done to decide on the best treatment for me?

Your medical team will make a diagnosis by looking at the cancerous cells (biopsy) under the microscope and send you for tests.

Your Staging tests may include Blood tests, Chest X-ray, Gallium scan, C.T. scan (Computerized Axial Tomography), M.R.I., (Magnetic Resonance Imaging), Bone Marrow Biopsy and PET scan. Your Doctor and Nurse will explain these to you

What is Staging?

Staging is a method to describe the extent of the spread of lymphoma. The following describes the stages involved with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma and Hodgkin's Lymphoma:

Stage I

One lymph node region involved, or single organ or site.

Stage II

Two or more lymph node regions on the same side of the diaphragm involved, or involvement of a single organ or site along with associated lymph nodes.

Stage III

Lymph node regions on both sides of the diaphragm involved possibly, plus local involvement of site or organ outside lymph nodes.

Stage IV

Widespread involvement of organs or tissues outside the lymphatic system.

What treatment will I need?

Your Oncologist will discuss in detail what type of treatment would be best for you so that you can decide on a plan together. Sometimes no treatment is recommended and you will only need to come for check-ups. Other times Chemotherapy, Radiation Therapy or a combination of both is necessary.

Can I bring my family or friend into the exam room with me?

We encourage you to bring family or friends into the room while the Doctor and Nurse are discussing treatment with you. These people will be asked to



step out of the room when the Doctor physically examines you unless you say that you would like them to stay. It is most helpful to have someone to talk to at home who has heard what the Doctor and Nurse has said about your treatment plan.

What is Chemotherapy?

Chemotherapy is the use of various drugs and combination of drugs to treat cancer.

Some of the drugs will be given intravenously and others will be in pill form. These drugs go in the blood and circulate throughout your whole body. Your Doctor will explain which drugs are best for you and how many treatments you may need. Your Nurse will give you written information about your Chemotherapy, the drugs and how to look after yourself during the treatment program.

Who will give me my treatments?

Your Oncologist will prescribe your treatment. A specially trained health care team will give you your treatment.

What is Radiation Therapy?

Radiation therapy is the delivery of high energy X-rays to a specific area of your body to kill cancer cells. It is used to shrink tumors or sterilize the tumor bed (after the tumor has been removed by chemotherapy or surgery). A special machine, called a linear accelerator, is programmed to deliver a high energy beam to the area of the tumor. This therapy causes genetic damage to the cancer cells and they die. Normal cells are affected too but they can heal or replace themselves.

On impact, the radiation discharges itself so you are not made radioactive, never toxic, you will not "glow in the dark" and the radiation does not travel around your body. There is no discomfort while the radiation is being given but because the cells are damaged, later you may feel side effects in the treated area.

Your health care team will tell you what will happen and how to look after yourself.

How often will I see my Doctor?

Each Oncologist works with a team of other Doctors and Nurses. You will be seen regularly by your medical team who will check on side effects and give advice as to how to manage them.

Remember to bring your questions and concerns with you each time you visit and your team will address them.

You will see your Oncologist if a change in treatment is needed. After the treatments are over, you will be examined in clinic frequently for the first two years. Eventually you will have yearly appointments.

When will my Doctor tell me if my treatments have been successful?

When you finish your treatment your Oncologist will tell you how successful your treatment has been. You may need to repeat the staging diagnostic tests to decide. This is called restaging.

What can I do if I need more support?

Anxiety, depression, mood changes and fear are normal feelings after a Lymphoma diagnosis. There are support groups and individual counseling for you and your family. The Social Worker, Dietician and Psychologist are part of your team. Ask your doctor to help you connect to this team.

Can I work, go to school and look after my family during treatment?

This varies from patient to patient and the treatment given. Some people cope better if they continue to work. Some people have flexibility in their jobs and are able to pace themselves. Some treatment programs are intense and time consuming and temporary lifestyle changes are advisable. This is a good subject to discuss with the Doctor and Nurse who have talked to you about your treatments.



When will I be able to live what I consider a normal life again?

Many people are able to live a normal life following treatment. Your Lymphoma treatments vary in time and intensity. How your body reacts will influence how quickly you can get back to doing the things you care about. Your health care team is committed to helping you to learn to live well with your Lymphoma.

Several recent advancements have been seen in the treatment of lymphoma which has led to many cases of this disease being treated successfully.

If you have any questions, please speak to your treating physician or health care provider.



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هل أستطيع العمل والدراسة ورعاية أسرتي أثناء علاجي؟

هذا يختلف من مريض إلى آخر وحسب نوع العلاج المقدم. يتكيف بعض الناس بصورة أفضل إذا استمروا في القيام بأعمالهم. بعض الناس يتميزون بالمرونة في وظائفهم ويستطيعون تكيف أنفسهم. بعض برامج العلاج مكثفة ومستهلكة للوقت ومن المتوقع حدوث تغيرات مؤقتة في أسلوب الحياة. هذا يمثل موضوعاً جيداً للمناقشة مع الطبيب والمرضة الذين تحدثوا إليك بشأن علاجك.

متى سوف أستطيع أن اعتبر نفسي عدت لممارسة حياة طبيعية مرة أخرى؟

يستطيع الكثير من الأشخاص أن يحيوا حياة طبيعية بعد العلاج. تختلف أنواع علاج الأورام للمفاوية السرطانية من ناحية الوقت والشدة. الطريقة التي يتفاعل بها جسمك مع العلاج سوف تؤثر على السرعة التي ستعود بها للقيام بالأشياء التي تهتم بها. فريق الرعاية الصحية الذي يتولى رعايتك ملتزم بمساعدتك في تعلم كيف تتوافق جيداً مع أورامك للمفاوية السرطانية.

يتميز هذا المرض بنسبة شفاء جيدة وتزيد فرص تقبل المريض للعلاج والشفاء في حال بدء العلاج بأسرع وقت ممكن بناء على استشارة المعالج. وهناك دراسات توصي بتحسين ظروف المريض النفسية في حال علاجه بين أسرته وأصدقائه.

وفي حال وجود أي أسئلة أو استفسارات لا تتردد في مناقشتها مع طبيبك أو الفريق المعالج لك.



إن المعلومات الواردة بهذه النشرة تهدف إلى التوعية وليست بأي حال من الأحوال بديلاً عن الرعاية الطبية المتخصصة لأغراض التشخيص أو العلاج، ويجب الرجوع للأطباء المعالجين للاستفسار عن أي أمور إضافية متخصصة ولطلب الاستشارة الطبية المتعلقة بأي مشكلة محددة.

