Non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma (NHL) is a cancer that starts in white blood cells called lymphocytes, which are part of the body’s immune system. Types of NHL can be grouped by how fast they grow and spread.

**Indolent NHL is a slow-growing type of NHL.** Common subtypes of indolent NHL include follicular lymphoma (FL) and marginal zone lymphoma.

### Frequency and Risk Factors

NHL is one of the most common cancers in the U.S.

- and indolent NHL represents ~40% of all cases

Several factors can contribute to a person’s chance of getting NHL, including age, gender and family history.

- Overall, more common in men than women
- Most cases occur in people 60 AND OLDER
- People with a weakened immune system or autoimmune disease are at greater risk

### Symptoms

NHL affects the body’s immune system, which helps fight infections and some other diseases, including cancer.

Common signs and symptoms of NHL can be associated with less serious diseases.

- Enlarged lymph nodes
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Swollen abdomen
- Severe or frequent infections
- Easy bruising or bleeding
- Fatigue
- Swollen abdomen
- Chest pain
- Severe or frequent infections
- Easy bruising or bleeding
## Diagnosis

Common tests used to diagnose NHL and determine how advanced the disease is include:

- Review of medical history and physical exam
- Biopsy
- Imaging tests such as X-rays, CT, MRI and PET scans
- Blood tests

## Treatment

Treatment for indolent NHL ranges from observation with careful monitoring, known as “watch and wait,” to aggressive therapy. Determining a treatment approach is complex and based on multiple factors including **prognostic factors, stage of disease, age and other medical conditions**.

Depending on these factors, treatment options may include:

- Chemotherapy
- Immunotherapy
- Targeted Therapies
- Radiation Therapy
- Stem Cell Transplant

## Prognosis

While the overall five-year survival rate for NHL is 71% on average and can be as high as 95% for certain types of indolent and/or localized, survival rates vary widely for different types and stages of lymphoma. Prognostic factors include age, stage of cancer, blood hemoglobin levels, number of lymph nodes affected and serum lactate dehydrogenase (LDH) levels.

Many patients with indolent NHL initially achieve good responses but experience multiple relapses that require several rounds of treatment. Durability of responses has typically been show to diminish with each line of therapy.

Ongoing research is being conducted to better understand the mechanisms behind indolent NHL, such as the role of the immune system, with the hope of developing more targeted therapies to ultimately improve the lives of patients with these diseases.

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