



DOCTOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

Managing Lymphoma

Lymphoma is a type of cancer involving the immune cells of the body. Abnormal immune cells can multiply, crowding out healthy immune cells and infiltrating the body's organs. With treatment, you can expect your outcome to improve. Asking the right questions during a conversation with your doctor will help you know what to expect and how to better navigate lymphoma. Familiarize yourself with these common terms before your appointment to help facilitate your discussion.

Vocabulary to Know

Your doctor might mention these common terms. Here's what they mean.

Lymphocyte	Immune cells that play a role in the body's immunity are described as lymphocytes. These include B cells and T cells. Lymphoma is an unhealthy overproduction of lymphocytes.
Lymph	Lymph is a type of fluid that travels throughout the body in the lymphatic vessels. It contains immune cells, proteins, and fluid.
Lymph nodes	Regions that store lymphocytes throughout the body. In some instances, a lymph node biopsy can be used to diagnose lymphoma.
Lymphadenopathy	If you have lymphoma, your lymph nodes can become swollen. This condition is described as lymphadenopathy, and it is usually painless.
Hodgkin lymphoma	A type of lymphoma in which certain cells, described as Reed-Sternberg cells, are seen in a biopsy cell sample. Approximately 10–15% of lymphoma is characterized as Hodgkin lymphoma and the treatment differs from non-Hodgkin lymphoma.
Non-Hodgkin lymphoma	The most common type of lymphoma is non-Hodgkin. It will not show Reed-Sternberg cells in a biopsy, and it is treated differently than Hodgkin lymphoma.
Tumor staging	The stage of a tumor is a categorization of its aggressiveness based on how extensively the cancer has spread.
Tumor grading	The cell type as seen under a microscope determines the grade of a tumor. A very abnormal appearing cell type indicates a high-grade aggressive tumor.
Epstein-Barr virus (EBV)	A common virus that typically causes a mild infection and has been associated with lymphoma.
Leukemia	Often confused with lymphoma, leukemia is cancer that forms in the bone marrow, and is not lymphoma. They are both described as hematopoietic cancers because they involve blood cells.



Questions to Ask

These questions can help guide you as you discuss your concerns with your medical team.

About Symptoms

- Is lymph node swelling a sign that my disease is worsening?
- Can the cancer cells spread to my other organs and cause damage?

About Causes & Risk Factors

- Could my illness have been caused by exposure to a toxin?
- Is there a genetic cause of my cancer?
- Are my family members at risk for lymphoma?

About Diagnosis

- Is all lymphoma considered cancer?
- Could my lymphoma type, stage, or grade change in the future?

About Treatment

- Can my lymphoma be cured?
- What is the difference between a cure and remission?
- Is bone marrow transplant an option for me?
- Is there any experimental therapy that I can try?

About Living With Lymphoma

- What should I do about fatigue?
- Is there anything I can take to reduce sweating and itching?
- Does my condition make me prone to infections?
- Will I be able to have children after I receive treatment?
