

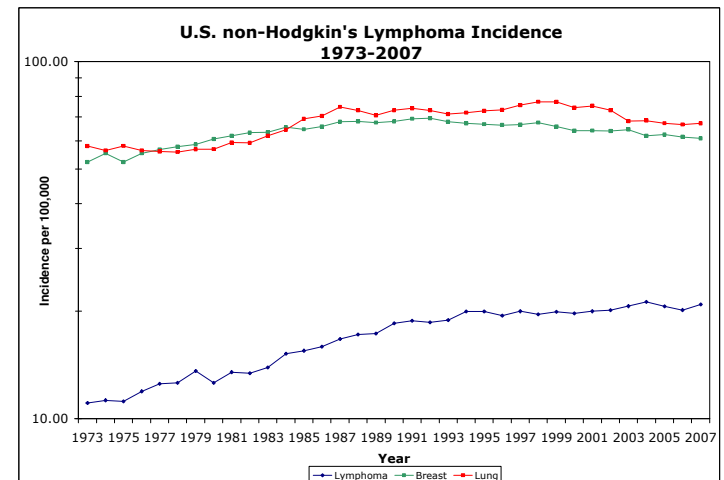
Lymphoma Quick Facts

What is Lymphoma

Lymphoma is a group of cancers of the Lymphocytes – one type of white blood cell that makes up the immune system. These lymphocytes circulate within the lymphatic system. The cancer most commonly appears in the lymph nodes, but it can spread to any other area of the body, even other organs. Leukaemia, which is a related disease, is a cancer of the white blood cells which circulate within the blood and bone marrow. Lymphoma is far more common than Leukaemia.

How common is Lymphoma?

Lymphoma has gone from being a relatively rare type of cancer to being the fifth most common cancer in North America. The incidence of lymphoma has nearly doubled since the 1970's. As you can see on the graph, the incidence of two of the most common cancers,



From the U.S. [SEER database](#). Incidence per 100,000

Breast and Lung has remained relatively stable for the past 30 years, In fact they have actually decreased in the past decade. Lymphoma on the other hand has increased from just 10 cases per 100,000 people in the early 1970's to over 20 people per 100,000 in the 2000's. It has remained somewhat stable for the past decade.

In the US there will be approximately 66,000 new cases in 2010, and in Canada 7,500 new cases. The five most common cancers in North America in order are: Prostate, Breast, Lung, Colon, Lymphoma. Part of the reason most people are unaware of Lymphoma is because it used to be so rare. In addition, the name doesn't suggest cancer.

Why is it on the increase

Scientists are still not sure what is causing the dramatic increase in cases of Lymphoma but environmental factors such as herbicides, pesticides and other chemicals may be one cause of increased risk. People who already have compromised immune systems are also at higher risk for getting Lymphoma. This includes people with diseases such as Lupus, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Multiple Sclerosis, AIDS, Type I diabetes, Sjogren Syndrome, Hashimoto's thyroiditis, and Fibromyalgia. A variety of viruses are also believed to increase the risk. This includes the viruses Epstein Barr, HTLV-1, Helicobacter Pylori, Hepatitis C and HIV. To read some studies about the causes of lymphoma go to the following link.

<http://www.nhlcyberfamily.org/about.htm#causes>

How many types of Lymphoma are there.

Broadly speaking Lymphoma is divided into two groups. Hodgkin's Disease (named after the doctor who discovered it) is a very rare type of Lymphoma. It can be separated into 4 variations, and has a very high cure rate of about 85%.

All the other lymphomas are called Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma and occur about seven times more frequently than Hodgkin's disease. There are over 30 varieties of Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma. NHL cure rates vary significantly depending upon which of the 30 subtypes the patient has. The more aggressive types can be cured about 50-90% of the time. The slow growing types generally cannot be cured, but

have an excellent long term survival prognosis. The median survival is around 10-15 years and increasing as new treatments are developed.

Are there symptoms of Lymphoma?

Many patients do not experience any symptoms which is why Lymphoma is often hard to diagnose. However some of the typical symptoms that are experienced by some patients are:

- Painless swelling of a lymph node
- Drenching night sweats
- Fatigue
- Unexplained weight loss of 10% or more
- Unexplained fever
- Coughs and breathlessness
- Persistent itch all over the body

Where can I learn more.

To find out more about Lymphoma visit the website of the Lymphoma Foundation Canada at:

<http://www.lymphoma.ca>

Or visit any of the following links for additional information.

The Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma Cyberfamily Information and Support group

<http://www.nhlcyberfamily.org>

The Lymphoma Research Foundation (US)

<http://www.lymphoma.org>

The National Cancer Institute Canada

<http://www.ncic.cancer.ca>

The National Cancer Institute U.S.

<http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics>