



CANCER AUSTRALIA

Lymphoma

Definition

- Lymphoma is a general term for a cancer that begins in the lymphatic system. There are many forms of lymphoma; the two main types are Hodgkin's disease and Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma (NHL). Both of these forms involve a malignant growth of cells in the lymphatic system, however the cells involved in NHL are specifically B- or T-cells of the lymphatic system. NHL is the most common form of lymphoma.

Incidence and mortality

- In 2005, lymphoma was the sixth most common cancer in Australia.
- There were 4479 new cases of lymphoma reported in 2006, accounting for 4.3 per cent of all new cancer cases. In both genders, lymphoma was the fifth most common cancer, with 2,518 cases (4.3 per cent) in males, and 1,961 cases (4.3 per cent) in females.
- The lifetime risk of developing lymphoma before the age of 75 is 1 in 64, with a higher risk in males (1 in 55) than females (1 in 77).
- The incidence of the 2 most common forms of lymphoma in 2006 were:
 - NHL: 3982 new cases (2250 males and 1732 females)
 - Hodgkin's disease: 497 new cases (268 males and 229 females).
- In 2007, lymphomas were responsible for 1395 deaths in Australia, accounting for 3.5 per cent of all cancer deaths. Lymphoma caused 780 male deaths and 615 female deaths in 2007.
- The number of deaths relating to the 2 forms of lymphoma in 2007 were:
 - NHL: 1325 deaths (737 males and 588 females)
 - Hodgkin's disease: 70 deaths (43 males and 27 females).

Trends

- The incidence rate of lymphomas has increased dramatically over the last 20 years (37 per cent), however mortality rates have remained relatively stable (decreasing by 13 per cent). This trend is largely influenced by patterns of NHL, with increases in incidence for both genders.
- The incidence and mortality rates of lymphoma increase with age, with incidence increasing from teenage years.

Relative survival

- 61.6 per cent of males and 62.6 per cent of females affected by NHL will be alive 5 years after their diagnosis.

- Hodgkin's disease has a higher survival rate with 84.8 per cent for males and 85.8 per cent for females alive 5 years after their diagnosis.

Risk factors

- The cause of lymphoma is unknown. As there are many different types of lymphoma, it is unlikely that there is one single cause of all lymphomas.
- Risk factors that increase the chance of developing lymphoma may include exposure to radiation, chemicals and certain viruses that suppress the immune system, such as HIV and the Epstein-Barr virus.

Sources: This factsheet draws on data published by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, including in:

- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2010. Australia's Health 2010. Australia's health series no. 12. Cat. no. AUS 122. Canberra: AIHW.
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Cancer Australia & Australasian Association of Cancer Registries 2008. Cancer survival and prevalence in Australia: cancers diagnosed from 1982 to 2004. Cancer series no. 42 Cat. no. CAN 38. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare) & AACR (Australasian Association of Cancer Registries) 2008. Cancer in Australia: an overview, 2008. Cancer series no. 46. Cat. no. CAN 42. Canberra: AIHW.
- www.aihw.gov.au/cancer/data/acim_books (viewed 28/9/2010) - 2006 incidence and 2007 mortality data.

The figures quoted relate to cancers C81-85, C96 as classified under the International Classification of Diseases (ICD – 10).

CANCER AUSTRALIA

ABN 21075951918

Disclaimer: This information is presented by Cancer Australia for the purpose of disseminating information free of charge to the public. It should not be used for therapeutic purposes or as a substitute for your own health professional's advice. Cancer Australia does not accept any liability for any injury, loss or damage incurred by use of or reliance on the information provided in this fact sheet.

Cancer Australia, PO Box 1201, Dickson ACT 2602

Email: enquiries@canceraustralia.gov.au