

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma

Patient Information about Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma

<http://www.oncologychannel.com/patient-information-non-hodgkins-lymphoma/index.shtml>

Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma (NHL) is a type of cancer that originates in the lymphatic system and can spread to other organs. The lymphatic system helps the body fight infection and disease and it is made up of special tissue, ducts, and organs (e.g., lymph nodes, bone marrow, spleen, thymus gland). Common symptoms associated with NHL include enlarged lymph nodes (e.g., in the neck, collarbone region, underarms, or groin) and unexplained fever and weight loss.

Treatment for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma depends on the type, stage, and grade of the disease and the age and overall health of the patient. It is important for patients who have been diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma to work closely with their oncology health care team (e.g., medical oncologist, hematologist, radiation oncologist, oncology nurse, licensed dietician) to develop a treatment plan.

Here are some questions to ask your doctor about NHL. **Print this page**, check off the questions you would like your doctor to answer, and take it with you to your appointment. The more information you have about non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, the easier it will be to make decisions about your lymphoma treatment.

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma

- What is non-Hodgkin's lymphoma?
- Why do you suspect that I have this type of cancer?
- What is the difference between NHL and Hodgkin's disease?
- What kinds of diagnostic tests will be performed to determine the type of lymphoma I have and whether my cancer is low-, intermediate-, or high-grade?
- What kind of biopsy will be performed? What does this procedure involve?
- How should I prepare for these diagnostic tests, including biopsy?
- What are the possible benefits, risks, and complications associated with these diagnostic procedures?
- What type of anesthesia will be used during my biopsy? Will it be painful? If so, how will my pain be controlled during and after the procedure?
- When can I return to my normal activities following my biopsy?

Date:

Restrictions:

- Will someone contact me after my biopsy or should I call for the results?

Telephone number to call:

Date to call:

- Who will explain the results of the biopsy to me?
- What is the stage and classification of my non-Hodgkin's lymphoma?
- What is the usual prognosis for patients who have this type, stage, and grade of NHL?
- Do you recommend I get a second medical opinion before starting treatment? Why or why not?

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about NHL Treatment

- Which treatment(s) for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma do you recommend? Why do you recommend this type of treatment?
- What are the potential benefits, risks, side effects, and complications of this NHL treatment?
- How can I help prepare myself for treatment? Do you recommend any lifestyle changes to help make my treatment easier?
- Will my health insurance cover my NHL treatment and medical expenses?
- How will my condition be monitored during my treatment for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma? How often will I have medical checkups during my course of treatment?
- If this treatment is unsuccessful, what other options are available to treat my NHL?
- If I will receive chemotherapy, radiation therapy, or biological therapy to treat NHL, how will these treatments be administered?
- How often will I receive treatments and how long will each treatment take?
- How should I expect to feel during treatment?

- Can I continue my normal activities during treatment for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma? If not, when can I return to work and other daily activities?

Date:

Restrictions:

- What should I do if my symptoms worsen or if severe side effects or complications develop during my treatment? **Telephone number to call:**

- Might I need stem cell therapy or surgery to treat my non-Hodgkin's lymphoma? If so, what do these treatments involve?

- What kind of special care might I need before, during, and after NHL treatment?

- What are the signs that indicate NHL treatment is working and that my cancer is in remission?

- Next appointment:**

Doctor:

Date:

Time:

Notes/Additional Information