

Hodgkin lymphoma

Hodgkin lymphoma (HL) is a type of blood cancer affecting the lymph nodes. The incidence of this disease is relatively low, with approximately two to three cases per one lakh people annually. It commonly occurs in two age groups: 15 to 30 years and 50 to 60 years. While certain viral infections like EBV and HHV-6 may contribute to its development in some cases, the exact cause remains unknown in many patients.

Individuals with Hodgkin lymphoma often present with enlarged lymph nodes and may experience symptoms like fever, weight loss, skin rashes, and night sweats. To confirm the diagnosis, a lymph node biopsy is performed, followed by examination using the IHC test.

Once diagnosed, a PET-CT scan is essential to determine the disease's stage before commencing treatment. Additional tests such as blood tests, ECHO, and PFT are also conducted to check whether patient is fit to undergo chemotherapy treatment. The overall cure rate after treatment exceeds 85%, although it may vary depending on factors like the disease stage, age, and ESR levels.

For patients above 18 years of age, chemotherapy with ABVD is the standard treatment. ABVD is administered every two weeks, completing a cycle after two treatments. PET-CT is repeated after two cycles, and if the results are favorable, four

more cycles of treatment (totaling six cycles) are given.

Patients younger than 18 years initially undergo two cycles of OEPA chemotherapy, followed by a PET-CT scan. If favorable results are observed, 2 to 4 cycles of COPDAC chemotherapy are administered.

For individuals above 60 years of age with compromised health, ABVD treatment may be challenging. In such cases, a modified chemotherapy regimen called ChIVPP can be considered. PET-CT is repeated after four cycles, and if the report shows improvement, four more cycles should be given.

It's important to note that the treatment process mentioned above applies to classical Hodgkin lymphoma. However, the rarer form of Nodular Lymphocyte Predominant Hodgkin lymphoma requires different treatment. For early-stage disease, radiotherapy alone may suffice, while in advanced stages, a combination of ABVD, CHOP, or CVP chemotherapy with Rituximab is recommended.

After any type of treatment for Hodgkin lymphoma, a follow-up PET-CT scan is conducted after two months to assess the treatment's effectiveness. Subsequently, patients should continue to see their doctor every three to six months for the next three years to monitor their condition.

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During treatment, there are no specific dietary restrictions for Hodgkin lymphoma patients. However, to prevent infections, it is advisable to consume cooked food and boiled water. Patients should avoid close contact with individuals suffering from fever and cough. Maintaining good personal hygiene, such as regular bathing and tooth brushing, is essential. It's crucial not to delay chemotherapy treatment unnecessarily. Chemotherapy drugs can have adverse effects on a developing fetus, so it is essential to take proper precautions to avoid pregnancy during treatment.

The likelihood of Hodgkin lymphoma being inherited is very low, only

around 1%. Moreover, this disease is not contagious and cannot spread from one person to another.

In the present scenario, numerous new drugs are available for treating Hodgkin lymphoma, and it is perfectly acceptable to explore these options. Some drugs are still in clinical trial stages, and patients may benefit from participating in such trials if given the opportunity.

If patients have any confusions or questions beyond the information provided here, they are encouraged to consult their specialist doctor for accurate and personalized information and guidance.

Dr. Girish Kamat MD, DNB (Hematology)

Professor,
Department of Hematology,
SDM College of Medical Sciences and Hospital,
Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara University,
Dharwad- 580008

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