

Lymphoma

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Lymphoma is a cancer originating in the white blood cells and occurs in two main forms: Hodgkin's lymphoma, which has in the past twenty years become one of the most treatable of all cancers, and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, which is far more prevalent yet has a less favorable treatment prognosis.

- 74,500 people in the United States were diagnosed with lymphoma in 2009. Of these, 8,500 were diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma and 66,000 were diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.
- That same year, lymphoma claimed the lives of over 20,500 Americans with 19,500 passing due to non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

Since 1980, the combined effort of cancer researchers has increased five-year survival rates of Hodgkin's lymphoma by 15% and increased the five-year survival with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma by 33%.

Our Achievements in Lymphoma Research

Damon Runyon scientists have been on the forefront of lymphoma research since 1957, when Dr. Henry Kaplan became the first to demonstrate cures for Hodgkin's disease using radiation therapy. Our scientists:

- ✓ were the first to demonstrate that Epstein-Barr virus can cause lymphoma.
- ✓ developed radioimmunotherapies such as the cancer drug Bexxar, which has resulted in remissions in the majority of patients who do not respond to chemotherapy.
- ✓ developed a new technology that allows the analysis of cancer-related proteins in the patient using a fast, non-invasive method. Using this method, scientists were able to easily distinguish types of lymphomas and test the efficacy of treatments without painful, invasive biopsies.

Current Lymphoma Research Projects

Damon Runyon is currently funding many scientists who are researching ways to better diagnose, treat and cure lymphoma. These funding are:

- developing novel immunotherapies for treating lymphomas, including a therapeutic vaccine for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and a targeted therapy for B-cell lymphomas.
- investigating adult T-cell leukemia/lymphoma, a deadly cancer that affects some of the most underserved cancer patients. This work will provide a framework for tests that distinguish patients who will benefit from interferon therapy from those who will not.
- studying how the immune system responds to persistent viral infections – a cause of lymphomas and other virally-induced cancers.
- seeking to discover infectious microorganisms associated with lymphomas. The characterization of the genetic changes caused by these microorganisms has the potential to facilitate the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of many cancers.

**Most Statistics adapted from the SEER Cancer Statistics Review, 1975-2006*