



The Training Brief

Quick Reference mini-training Topics Non Hodgkin's Lymphoma

The purpose of this training topic is to understand the signs and symptoms of Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma in Firefighters. Firefighters have a 1.51 greater times risk of lymphoma than the general public.

Discussion

Fact: Firefighters are at an increased risk of occupational cancer than the general public.

Key Points: A 2006 meta-analysis by Grace LeMasters of 32 firefighter cancer studies their team found that, compared with the general population, a 1.5-fold increased risk of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

NIOSH conducted a study of 30,000 firefighters and occupational cancer. The results were a 9% higher chance of firefighters being diagnosed with cancer than the general public and a 14% higher rate of dying from cancer than the general public.

Action: Take the needed steps to reduce your exposure to known carcinogens:

- Use a diesel exhaust capture system each and every time apparatus enter and exit a fire station.
- Wear your SCBA from the start of a fire through overhaul.
- Perform a Personal Hazard Reduction including the use of wet wipes whenever exposed to products of combustion.
- Shower within the hour after a fire.
- Clean PPE per NFPA 1851 guidelines.

Make the necessary changes

Non-Hodgkin lymphoma (also known as non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, NHL, or sometimes just lymphoma) is a cancer that starts in white blood cells called lymphocytes, which are part of the body's immune system.

Lymphoma can start in either type of lymphocytes, but B-cell lymphomas are most common.

Some studies have suggested that chemicals such as benzene and certain herbicides and insecticides (weed- and insect-killing substances) may be linked to an increased risk of NHL

Common Signs and Symptoms:

- Enlarged lymph nodes (Enlarged lymph nodes close to the surface of the body (such as on the sides of the neck, in the groin or underarm areas, or above the collar bone), may be seen or felt as **lumps under the skin**. These are usually not painful).
- Chills
- Weight loss
- Fatigue (feeling very tired)
- Swollen abdomen (belly)
- Feeling full after only a small amount of food
- Chest pain or pressure
- Shortness of breath or cough
- Severe or frequent infections
- Easy bruising or bleeding

Some people with Non-Hodgkin lymphoma have what are known as B symptoms:

- Fever (which can come and go over several days or weeks) without an infection
- Drenching night sweats
- Weight loss without trying (at least 10% of body weight over 6 months).

Prevention:

It cannot be understated about the importance of annual medical exams. The FCSN and Dr. Michael Hamrock have developed a medical form you can download, print and bring to your Doctor.

https://firefightercancersupport.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Primary-care-cancer-evaluations-for-firefighters_HamrockMD_2016_FCSN.pdf

Source: American Cancer Society: <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/non-hodgkin-lymphoma/about/what-is-non-hodgkin-lymphoma.html>