**Understanding Indolent Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma (iNHL)**

**What is the Lymphatic System?**

The lymphatic system is part of the immune system. A network of lymph vessels carry a clear fluid called lymph around the body. This fluid contains white blood cells, especially B- and T-cell lymphocytes, which help fight infection.

**What is iNHL?**

Non-Hodgkin lymphoma is a cancer of the lymphatic system. Lymphocytes (white blood cells) proliferate to form malignant tumours in the lymph nodes or lymphatic tissue. NHL can be divided into aggressive (fast-growing) and indolent (slow-growing) types and originate from either B-cell or T-cell lymphocytes.

**NHL has at least 30 subtypes.**

- **Some aggressive NHLs can be cured.**
- **Advanced indolent NHLs are usually incurable.**
- **35% of all NHLs are indolent.**

**Main Causes of iNHL**

- Infections, including HIV, HCV, EBV.
- Family history doubles the risk.
- Drugs to suppress immune system after a transplant.
- Exposure to pesticides and benzene.

**Symptoms of iNHL**

- iNHL patients usually present with an asymptomatic swelling in the lymph nodes, such as in the neck, armpit or groin.

**Impact**

- NHL is the 10th most common cancer worldwide.
- Estimated 356,000 new cases diagnosed in 2008.

**Treatment for iNHL**

- How a patient is treated depends on the stage of their disease. There are a number of options available: watchful waiting, radiotherapy, chemotherapy, immunotherapy, stem cell transplant, or a combination.

**References**

1. NCI. What you need to know about NHL. 2007; NIH Publication No. 07-1567.