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Waldenström's Macroglobulinemia - Risk Factors [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the Cancer.Net Editorial Board [2], 12/2014

ON THIS PAGE: You will find out more about the factors that increase the chance of developing this type of cancer. To see other pages, use the menu on the side of your screen.

A risk factor is anything that increases a person?s chance of developing cancer. Although risk factors often influence the development of cancer, most do not directly cause cancer. Some people with several risk factors never develop cancer, while others with no known risk factors do. However, knowing your risk factors and talking about them with your doctor may help you make more informed lifestyle and health care choices.

The following factors may raise a person?s risk of developing Waldenstrom?s macroglobulinemia:

Age. The risk of Waldenstrom?s macroglobulinemia increases with age. It occurs most commonly in people older than 60.

Gender. Men are more likely to develop Waldenstrom?s macroglobulinemia than women.

Race. White people are more likely to develop Waldenstrom?s macroglobulinemia than black people.

Monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS). MGUS is a buildup of monoclonal antibodies produced by abnormal plasma cells. MGUS does not generally cause symptoms or many health problems, although the abnormal antibody can occasionally bind to nerves and cause weakness, tingling, and numbness. However, about 20% of people with MGUS will develop non-Hodgkin lymphoma [3] or multiple myeloma [4] within 20 years.

To continue reading this guide, use the menu on the side of your screen to select another section.

Links:
[1] http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/waldenstrom%E2%80%99s-macroglobulinemia/risk-factors
[2] http://www.cancer.net/about-us
[3] http://www.cancer.net/node/31269
[4] http://www.cancer.net/node/31400