



NCCN QUICK GUIDE™

# Waldenström's Macroglobulinemia/ Lymphoplasmacytic Lymphoma

This NCCN QUICK GUIDE™ sheet summarizes key points from the complete NCCN Guidelines for Patients®: Waldenström's Macroglobulinemia/Lymphoplasmacytic Lymphoma. These guidelines explain which tests and treatments are recommended by experts in cancer. To view and download the guidelines, visit [NCCN.org/patients](http://NCCN.org/patients) or, to order printed copies, visit [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com).

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## What is Waldenström's macroglobulinemia?

Waldenström's macroglobulinemia (WM) is a type of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma (NHL). It is a rare type of lymphoma. Lymphoma is a type of cancer that starts in the cells of the immune system.	<a href="#">8</a>
WM cells share similarities with both plasma cells (multiple myeloma) and lymphocytes (lymphoma).	<a href="#">11</a>
For reasons that are not clear, most Waldenström tumor cells make a type of antibody or immunoglobulin called IgM (immunoglobulin M).	<a href="#">11</a>

## What tests may I need before treatment?

<b>Medical history and physical exam</b>	Two basic tools of diagnosis are when your doctor takes your medical history and does an exam of your body.	<a href="#">15</a>
<b>Blood tests</b>	Your doctors will order a complete blood count, comprehensive metabolic panel, and test for IgM in the blood.	<a href="#">15</a>
<b>Imaging tests</b>	A CT of the chest, abdomen, and pelvis is the most common imaging test for WM.	<a href="#">17</a>
<b>Biopsy</b>	Samples of tissue or fluid must be removed from your body and be tested to diagnose cancer.	<a href="#">18</a>

## Why is treatment given?

For people with WM, treatment is given to control disease and limit harm to your organs. If you are not having symptoms, you may not be treated right away.	<a href="#">20</a>
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## What are my options?

<b>Observation</b>	Your doctor will watch you closely to see if the cancer is growing. You will both decide when and if you should start treatment.	<a href="#">20</a>
<b>Plasmapheresis</b>	Plasmapheresis is a process that removes IgM from the blood.	<a href="#">23</a>
<b>Chemotherapy</b>	Chemotherapy, or chemo, is a main systemic cancer treatment. Systemic treatment travels throughout the body.	<a href="#">23</a>
<b>Steroids</b>	Steroids are a type of drug that is often used to relieve inflammation. Steroids also are toxic to lymphoma cells and therefore have strong anti-cancer effects.	<a href="#">25</a>
<b>Targeted therapy</b>	Targeted therapies are drugs that sometimes can directly kill cancer cells. They can be used alone or combined with other drugs.	<a href="#">25</a>
<b>Immunomodulators</b>	Immunomodulators are drugs that modify different parts of your immune system. The exact function of these drugs is not known.	<a href="#">28</a>
<b>Stem cell transplant</b>	A stem cell transplant replaces damaged or destroyed stem cells with healthy stem cells, which form new marrow and blood cells.	<a href="#">29</a>
<b>Clinical trials</b>	A clinical trial is a type of research study that people chose to take part in.	<a href="#">30</a>

## When is treatment given?

<b>Primary treatment</b>	The first treatment options for WM are called primary treatment. You should get this treatment if you have symptoms of WM.	<a href="#">36</a>
<b>Relapsed or refractory treatment</b>	Treatment for WM that didn't respond to (refractory) or reappears (relapsed) after the first treatment.	<a href="#">39</a>

## How do I decide between my options?

Ask your doctors many questions. Also, you could get a second opinion, attend support groups, and compare the benefits and risks.	<a href="#">42</a>
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