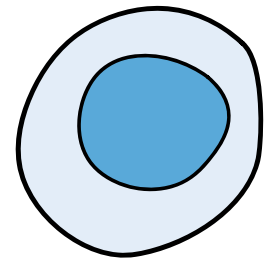


Richter syndrome

This is a rare complication of CLL. It happens when CLL progresses into a fast-growing type of lymphoma. It is also known as Richter transformation.

Lymphoma is a type of blood cancer. It affects white blood cells called lymphocytes in your lymphatic system.

There are many different types of lymphoma. Most people with Richter syndrome develop diffuse large B-cell lymphoma. This is a type of non-Hodgkin lymphoma. Some people develop other types of lymphoma.



Lymphocyte

About 1 in 200 people with CLL develop Richter syndrome every year. This means 199 in 200 do not.

We do not know exactly what causes Richter syndrome. Most people who develop Richter syndrome have had advanced-stage CLL. They've often had multiple treatments for CLL, particularly chemotherapy.

Richter syndrome is rare. Most people with CLL never develop it.

Symptoms and diagnosis

Richter syndrome causes symptoms that get worse quickly. You may experience new symptoms including:



Sudden swelling of your lymph nodes



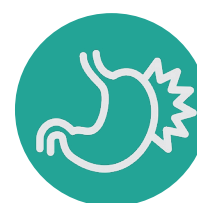
Unexplained fever



Night sweats



Weight loss



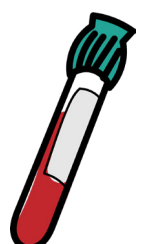
Tummy pain or fullness

Contact your haematology team if you are worried about any symptoms.

You'll need to have a lymph node biopsy to diagnose Richter syndrome.

You may also have:

- Blood tests
- Bone marrow tests
- A special scan called a PET scan



Treatment for Richter syndrome

Richter syndrome is a serious condition and can be very hard to treat. Depending on your test results and general health, your treatment options may include:

- Chemotherapy, sometimes alongside antibody therapy.
- Stem cell transplant. This intensive treatment replaces damaged or abnormal blood-forming cells in your bone marrow with healthy ones.
- Taking part in a clinical trial.
- Palliative care. This aims to reduce symptoms and side effects and improve your quality of life.

After treatment for Richter syndrome, your CLL will still need be monitored.

Your haematology specialist is best placed to talk to you about your options and your outlook.

This information is aimed at people in the UK. We do our best to make sure it is accurate and up to date but it should not replace advice or guidance from your health professional.

For [more information about CLL](#), follow the link. Or search 'CLL' at www.leukaemiacare.org.uk or scan the QR code. This also includes links to order free information in print.



Need help? We offer a range of [support services](#). To find out more, scan the QR code, click the link or search 'support for you' at leukaemiacare.org.uk



Want to talk about CLL?

Call our freephone helpline on **08088 010 444** (weekdays 9am to 4.30pm)

Send a WhatsApp to **07500 068065** (weekdays 9am to 4.30pm)

Visit www.leukaemiacare.org.uk

Email support@leukaemiacare.org.uk

If you'd like to comment on our content or have a list of the sources we used for this factsheet, please get in touch. Email information@leukaemiacare.org.uk or call **08088 010 444**. Or complete our [short survey](#).



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