

Cheat Sheets

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Lymphoma & Myeloma

1. Hematologic Malignancies

Lymphoma and multiple myeloma are hematologic malignancies that involve **abnormal proliferation of immune cells** (mainly lymphocytes and plasma cells).

2. Lymphoma

Lymphoma = cancer of the **lymphatic system** (lymph nodes, spleen).

- Proliferation of malignant, **nonfunctioning lymphocytes** (B or T cells)
- Commonly affects **young adults**

Two main types are:

- **Hodgkin lymphoma (HL)**
 - Presence of **Reed-Sternberg cells** (specific kind of abnormal lymphocytes) in lymph nodes
 - Spreads **predictably** and is usually **curable**
- **Non-Hodgkin lymphoma (NHL)**
 - **No Reed-Sternberg cells** in lymph nodes
 - Spreads **rapidly** and is more frequently **fatal**

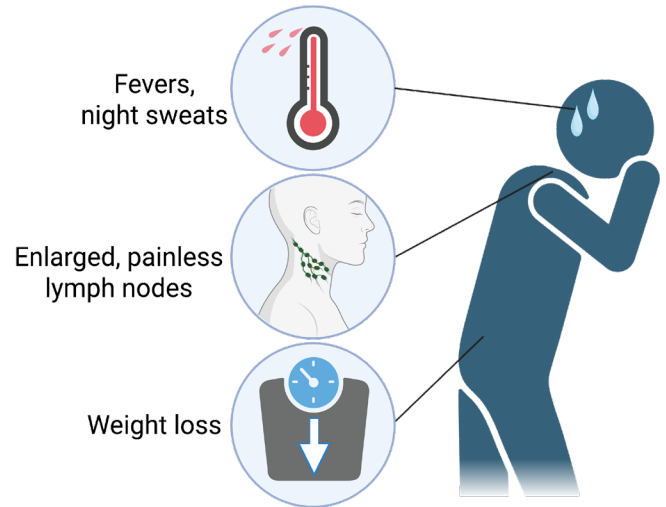
Assessment (FIGURE 1)

- ★ Enlarged, **painless lymph nodes** (lymphadenopathy); often **cervical** or axillary nodes
- Fever, **night sweats**, weight loss
- ★ Positive lymph node biopsy
 - **HL: Reed-Sternberg cells present**
 - **NHL: No Reed-Sternberg cells**

Nursing priorities

1. Prepare for **treatment**:
 - Anticipate **radiation** and administer **chemotherapy** as prescribed.
 - ★ Discuss **fertility preservation** (e.g., sperm banking) in **young adults** due to the risk for **sterility** from treatment.

FIGURE 1. LYMPHOMA FINDINGS



2. Prevent **infection** and **skin damage**:

- Implement **neutropenic precautions** if necessary (place in a private room).
- Teach client to use **mild soaps** and **avoid sun exposure** to prevent radiation-related skin breakdown.

3. Manage **complications**:

- ★ Monitor for signs of **infection** and **bleeding** due to ↓ immunity and chemotherapy (neutropenia, thrombocytopenia).
- Monitor for **facial edema** and **jugular vein distension**, which can indicate **superior vena cava syndrome** from vena cava **compression** by enlarged lymph nodes.
- See [CANCER CHEAT SHEET](#) for more information about complications of chemotherapy and radiation.



NCLEX Star Points

① **Lymphoma findings:** Enlarged, **painless lymph nodes** and a positive lymph node biopsy are signs of lymphoma. **Reed-Sternberg cells** are **present** in **Hodgkin** lymphoma, but **not** in **non-Hodgkin** lymphoma.

② **Sterility risk:** Discuss **fertility preservation** (e.g., sperm banking) in **young adults** with lymphoma due to the risk for **sterility** from treatment.

3. Multiple Myeloma

Multiple myeloma = cancer of **plasma cells**

(B lymphocytes), which causes them to produce abnormal monoclonal ("M") proteins.

- Malignant **plasma cells** crowd the **bone marrow** → Overproduction of M proteins → **Bone destruction**, **hypercalcemia**, and **renal failure**.

Assessment

- ★ **Bone marrow crowding + bone destruction** →

CRAB findings

- **C:** ↑ **Calcium**/hypercalcemia from bone destruction
- **R:** **Renal** failure from M proteins and ↑ Ca, damaging the kidneys
- **A:** **Anemia** from ↓ RBC production
- **B:** **Bone** pain and pathologic fractures

Nursing priorities

1. Prevent **fractures** and manage **bone pain**:

- ★ Use **caution** when **repositioning** the client (use braces, avoid twisting).
- Implement **fall precautions** (remove throw rugs).
- Administer **analgesics** (opioids) and **bisphosphonates** as prescribed.

2. Provide **treatment** and **fluids**:

- Administer **chemotherapy** as prescribed.
- ★ Encourage increased **fluid intake** and administer loop diuretics to **flush out** M proteins and calcium.

3. Monitor for life-threatening **complications**:

- ★ **Hypercalcemia**: Lethargy, muscle weakness
- ★ **Renal failure**: ↑ **creatinine**
- **Infection**: Fever, sore throat



NCLEX Star Points

- ③ **Multiple myeloma findings**: Multiple myeloma presents with **CRAB findings**: Increased **Calcium** (hypercalcemia), **Renal** failure, **Anemia**, and **Bone** pain and pathologic fractures.
- ④ **Fracture risk**: Clients with multiple myeloma are at increased risk for **pathologic fractures**. Use **caution** when **repositioning** the client (use braces, avoid twisting).
- ⑤ **Multiple myeloma complications**: Monitor clients with multiple myeloma for signs of **hypercalcemia** (**muscle weakness**) and **renal failure** (↑ **creatinine**) and encourage increased **fluid intake** to flush out proteins and calcium.

NCLEX Top 5 Targets

- ❶ Lymphoma presents with enlarged, _____ (painful or painless?) lymph nodes. **Reed-Sternberg cells** are found in **Hodgkin lymphoma (True or False?)**.
- ❷ In **young adults** with **lymphoma**, the nurse should discuss _____ **preservation** due to the risk for _____ from treatment.
- ❸ Multiple myeloma presents with **CRAB findings**: Increased **C**_____, **R**_____, **A**_____, and **B**_____ and _____.
- ❹ Clients with multiple myeloma are at increased risk for **pathologic** _____. The nurse should use **caution** when _____ the client.
- ❺ Monitor clients with multiple myeloma for signs of **hypercalcemia**, like _____, and signs of **renal failure**, like **increased** _____, and encourage increased _____ **intake** to flush out proteins and calcium.

Answers: 1. painless; True 2. fertility; sterility 3. Calcium, Renal failure, Anemia, Bone pain, pathologic fractures 4. fractures; repositioning 5. muscle weakness, creatinine.

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Attributions:

- **Lymphoma Findings:** Created with [BioRender.com](https://www.biorender.com)