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Hodgkin's Lymphoma

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Stitch It Group Inc. (B)

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Hodgkin's Lymphoma

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Definition: A cancer of the immune system that is marked by the presence of a type of cell called the Reed-Sternberg cell.

Normal
lymphocyte



Reed-Sternberg
Cell

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Symptoms include the painless enlargement of lymph nodes, spleen, or other immune tissue. Other symptoms include fever, weight loss, fatigue, or night sweats.



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Lymph nodes often swell in one location when a problem such as an injury, infection, or tumor develops in or near the lymph node.

It's not clear what causes Hodgkin's lymphoma. Doctors know that most Hodgkin's lymphoma occurs when an infection-fighting cell called a B cell develops a mutation in its DNA. The mutation tells the cells to divide rapidly and to continue living when a healthy cell would die. The mutation causes a large number of oversized, abnormal B cells to accumulate in the lymphatic system, where they crowd out healthy cells and cause the signs and symptoms of Hodgkin's lymphoma.

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If you go to the doctor for an unexplained lump, your doctor will ask you about your health and examine you. You may have a blood test to check your general health. As most causes of enlarged glands are not serious, your doctor may suggest examining you again in a couple of weeks. Most enlarged glands will have gone down by then. If the lymph glands stay enlarged they will refer you to the hospital.

