

THE WMFC MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF WM PATIENTS.

The WMFC is a voluntary nonprofit organization and affiliate of the International Waldenstrom's Macroglobulinemia Foundation (IWMF) dedicated to providing hope and support for everyone affected by WM while advancing the search for a cure.

The WMFC offers WM patients, caregivers, family members and friends invaluable services:

- Information from our website and publications including the Torch newsletter, written in a patient-friendly way to promote understanding of this rare disease.
- Annual education forums hosted by the IWMF and bi-annual WMFC Educational Forums held in major cities across Canada to help patients and caregivers learn about this disease from renowned WM researchers and clinicians.
- Peer support. For information about a support group near you, contact our website: www.wmfc.ca. The Canadian Lifeline is an invaluable resource to get first-hand accounts how WM patients have experienced various treatment options. IWMF Connect is another avenue for information and peer support.
- Information for medical professionals who may have limited experience with this rare disease.
- Research directed to better treatments while we search for a cure! WM research is vital to finding the cause and ultimately a cure for this rare cancer. To date \$1M has been spent on WM research with the goal of keeping our administrative costs at 5%.

'We are committed to finding a cure for WM.'

Since WM is a rare disease, the WMFC relies upon individuals for financial support and upon volunteers to do its work and help it grow. You can participate in this vital work by becoming a member.

Anyone (patient, caregiver, family member) can become a member. Membership is free and enables you to receive up to date WM information and helps us to provide statistics for research, clinical trials and advocacy. You can also offer to volunteer or make a donation.

Donations can be made online at www.wmfc.ca or by mail to WMFC, 55 Albert St., Unit #100, Markham, Ontario L3P 2T4.

SUPPORT GROUP LOCATIONS

Halifax • Ottawa • Toronto
Calgary • Vancouver
and more to come

For further information about support groups, please contact info@wmfc.ca or visit www.wmfc.ca

WHAT IS WALDENSTROM'S MACROGLOBULINEMIA?



UNDERSTANDING
AND MAKING A
DIFFERENCE



THERE IS
CURRENTLY
NO CURE FOR WM
BUT IT IS
TREATABLE
IT'S A DISEASE
YOU CAN
LIVE WITH



WHAT IS **WALDENSTROM'S MACROGLOBULINEMIA?**

Dr. Jan Gosta Waldenstrom, a Swedish internist, first described the disease that bears his name in 1944. Waldenstrom's macroglobulinemia (WM) is an indolent (slow-growing) subtype of non-Hodgkin Lymphoma with a proliferation of lymphoplasmacytic cells. WM is rare, with an incidence rate of about 5 cases per million people per year in Canada and the U.S.

In WM there is a malignant change to the DNA of B lymphocytes. The malignant (cancerous) lymphocytes produce the overproduction of a monoclonal protein called "immunoglobulin M" (IgM), which can, at high levels, result in thickening of the blood known as "hyperviscosity." This monoclonal IgM protein and the presence of WM cells in the bone marrow, lymph nodes, and spleen may lead to many symptoms, including anemia, fatigue, unexplained weight loss, enlarged lymph nodes or spleen, weakness and unexplained bleeding. Most patients (>90%) with WM express a mutation in the MYD88 gene and some patients (up to 40%) may carry a mutation in the CXCR4 gene. These mutations may impact clinical presentation of WM and treatment of WM. Some patients with WM do not have symptoms

at diagnosis and may not require treatment for years. In these cases, patients are closely monitored for symptoms in an approach known as "watch and wait." Active treatment is started only when symptoms appear.

There is no cure for WM at the present time, but the disease is treatable. Selecting the best treatment for WM should take into consideration patient characteristics (such as age and other health concerns), disease factors (such as presence of low blood counts or hyperviscosity and presence of enlarged lymph nodes or spleen) and treatment side effects. This individualization of therapy should be discussed with your physician. Therapies that are available include biological agents (treatment that stimulates the immune system to fight cancer), signaling inhibitors (drugs that block growth and survival signals), and traditional chemotherapy. These agents, on their own or in combination, may produce promising results and can lead to higher quality of life, relatively free from symptoms. The safety and effectiveness of potential new therapies for WM patients are being researched in clinical trials.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT WALDENSTROM'S MACROGLOBULINEMIA,
PLEASE CONTACT **INFO@WMFC.CA** OR VISIT **WWW.WMFC.CA**