

# T-cell/histiocyte-rich large B-cell lymphoma

## Definition

T-cell/histiocyte-rich large B-cell lymphoma (THRLBCL) is characterized by a limited number of scattered, large B cells embedded in a background of abundant T cells and histiocytes. THRLBCL may arise *de novo*; however, more recent data suggest the possibility of a closer relationship with progression forms of nodular lymphocyte predominant Hodgkin lymphoma (NLPHL) than previously thought, indicating that NLPHL may proceed to or contain areas indistinguishable from THRLBCL. In small biopsies in particular, differentiating between a progression form of NLPHL (i.e. NLPHL with THRLBCL-like transformation) and *de novo* THRLBCL may be difficult, if not impossible.

## ICD-O code

9688/3

## Synonyms

T-cell-rich B-cell lymphoma; B-cell lymphoma rich in T cells and simulating Hodgkin disease; histiocyte-rich/T-cell-rich large B-cell lymphoma; T-cell-rich large B-cell lymphoma; T-cell-rich/histiocyte-rich large B-cell lymphoma; histiocyte-rich large B-cell lymphoma

## Epidemiology

THRLBCL mainly affects middle-aged men. It accounts for < 10% of all DLBCLs.

## Localization

THRLBCL mainly affects the lymph nodes, but bone marrow, liver, and spleen involvement is frequently found at diagnosis.

## Clinical features

Patients present with fever, malaise, splenomegaly, and/or hepatomegaly. At diagnosis, almost half of cases are at an advanced Ann Arbor stage, with an intermediate-risk to high-risk International Prognostic Index (IPI) score (Table 13.24). The disease is often refractory to the chemotherapy regimens currently in use.

## Imaging

Because of the important differential

diagnosis with NLPHL, clinical staging procedures (including imaging analyses) are important. NLPHL usually affects one or two regions, whereas THRLBCL frequently manifests as systemic disease. Because THRLBCL is more PET-avid than is NLPHL, staging procedures such as FDG-PET and CT may facilitate the differential diagnosis [246].

## Microscopy

THRLBCL has a diffuse or less commonly vaguely nodular growth pattern replacing most of the normal lymph node parenchyma. It is composed of scattered, single large B cells embedded in a background of small T cells and variable numbers of histiocytes. The tumour cells are always dispersed and do not form aggregates or sheets. These cells may mimic the neoplastic lymphocyte predominant

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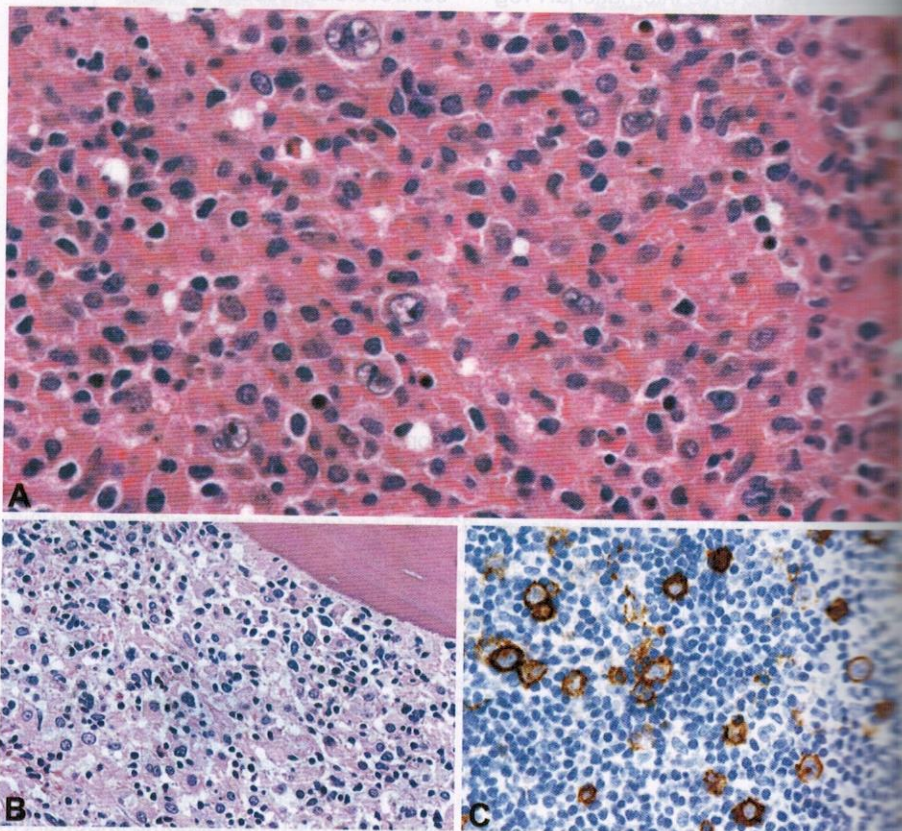


Fig. 13.108 T-cell/histiocyte-rich large B-cell lymphoma. A Lymph node. B Bone marrow. C CD20 stain highlights the large neoplastic B cells.

(LP) cells of NLPHL, but usually show greater variation in size and, in some cases, may resemble centroblasts or more pleomorphic cells, mimicking Reed-Sternberg or Hodgkin cells [19,3299]. They are typically found within clusters of bland-looking non-epithelioid histiocytes that may not be obvious on conventional examination. These histiocytes are a main and distinctive component of THRLBCL and are useful for the diagnosis [1448]. Nearly all of the background lymphocytes are of T-cell lineage, with typically only very few scattered B cells. Meshworks or follicular dendritic cells are absent. Eosinophils and plasma cells are not found. *De novo* THRLBCLs are usually diffuse and do not show the typical small B-cell background of NLPHL. However, there are cases of NLPHL in which the small B cells are diminished in number, and in



# Contents

<b>WHO classification of tumours of haematopoietic and lymphoid tissues</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7 Myeloid neoplasms with germline predisposition</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>Introduction to the WHO classification of tumours of haematopoietic and lymphoid tissues</b>	<b>13</b>	Myeloid neoplasms with germline predisposition without a pre-existing disorder or organ dysfunction	124
<b>1 Introduction and overview of the classification of the myeloid neoplasms</b>	<b>15</b>	Acute myeloid leukaemia with germline <i>CEBPA</i> mutation	124
<b>2 Myeloproliferative neoplasms</b>	<b>29</b>	Myeloid neoplasms with germline <i>DDX41</i> mutation	125
Chronic myeloid leukaemia, <i>BCR-ABL 1</i> -positive	30	Myeloid neoplasms with germline predisposition and pre-existing platelet disorders	125
Chronic neutrophilic leukaemia	37	Myeloid neoplasms with germline <i>RUNX1</i> mutation	125
Polycythaemia vera	39	Myeloid neoplasms with germline <i>ANKRD26</i> mutation	125
Primary myelofibrosis	44	Myeloid neoplasms with germline <i>ETV6</i> mutation	126
Prefibrotic/early primary myelofibrosis	46	Myeloid neoplasms with germline predisposition associated with other organ dysfunction	126
Overt primary myelofibrosis	48	Myeloid neoplasms with germline <i>GATA2</i> mutation	126
Essential thrombocythaemia	50	Myeloid neoplasms with germline predisposition associated with inherited bone failure syndromes and telomere biology disorders	128
Chronic eosinophilic leukaemia, not otherwise specified	54	<b>8 Acute myeloid leukaemia and related precursor neoplasms</b>	<b>129</b>
Myeloproliferative neoplasm, unclassifiable	57	Acute myeloid leukaemia with recurrent genetic abnormalities	130
<b>3 Mastocytosis</b>	<b>61</b>	Introduction	130
Cutaneous mastocytosis	65	Acute myeloid leukaemia with t(8;21)(q22;q22.1); <i>RUNX1-RUNX1T1</i>	130
Systemic mastocytosis	66	Acute myeloid leukaemia with inv(16)(p13.1q22) or t(16;16)(p13.1;q22); <i>CBFB-MYH11</i>	132
Mast cell sarcoma	69	Acute promyelocytic leukaemia with <i>PML-RARA</i>	134
<b>4 Myeloid/lymphoid neoplasms with eosinophilia and gene rearrangement</b>	<b>71</b>	Acute myeloid leukaemia with t(9;11)(p21.3;q23.3); <i>KMT2A-MLL3</i>	136
Myeloid/lymphoid neoplasms with <i>PDGFRA</i> rearrangement	73	Acute myeloid leukaemia with t(6;9)(p23;q34.1); <i>DEK-NUP214</i>	137
Myeloid/lymphoid neoplasms with <i>PDGFRB</i> rearrangement	75	Acute myeloid leukaemia with inv(3)(q21.3q26.2) or t(3;3)(q21.3;q26.2); <i>GATA2, MECOM</i>	138
Myeloid/lymphoid neoplasms with <i>FGFR1</i> rearrangement	77	Acute myeloid leukaemia (megakaryoblastic) with t(1;22)(p13.3;q13.1); <i>RBM15-MKL1</i>	139
Myeloid/lymphoid neoplasms with <i>PCM1-JAK2</i>	78	Acute myeloid leukaemia with <i>BCR-ABL 1</i>	140
<b>5 Myelodysplastic/myeloproliferative neoplasms</b>	<b>81</b>	Acute myeloid leukaemia with gene mutations	141
Chronic myelomonocytic leukaemia	82	Acute myeloid leukaemia with mutated <i>NPM1</i>	141
Atypical chronic myeloid leukaemia, <i>BCR-ABL 1</i> -negative	87	Acute myeloid leukaemia with biallelic mutation of <i>CEBPA</i>	142
Juvenile myelomonocytic leukaemia	89	Acute myeloid leukaemia with mutated <i>RUNX1</i>	144
Myelodysplastic/myeloproliferative neoplasm with ring sideroblasts and thrombocytosis	93	Acute myeloid leukaemia with myelodysplasia-related changes	150
Myelodysplastic/myeloproliferative neoplasm, unclassifiable	95	Therapy-related myeloid neoplasms	153
<b>6 Myelodysplastic syndromes</b>	<b>97</b>	Acute myeloid leukaemia, not otherwise specified	156
Overview	98	Acute myeloid leukaemia with minimal differentiation	156
Myelodysplastic syndrome with single lineage dysplasia	106	Acute myeloid leukaemia without maturation	157
Myelodysplastic syndrome with ring sideroblasts	109	Acute myeloid leukaemia with maturation	158
Myelodysplastic syndrome with multilineage dysplasia	111	Acute myelomonocytic leukaemia	159
Myelodysplastic syndrome with excess blasts	113	Acute monoblastic and monocytic leukaemia	160
Myelodysplastic syndrome with excess blasts and erythroid predominance	114	Pure erythroid leukaemia	161
Myelodysplastic syndrome with excess blasts and fibrosis	114	Acute megakaryoblastic leukaemia	162
Myelodysplastic syndrome with isolated del(5q)	115	Acute basophilic leukaemia	164
Myelodysplastic syndrome, unclassifiable	116	Acute panmyelosis with myelofibrosis	165
Childhood myelodysplastic syndrome	116	Myeloid sarcoma	167
Refractory cytopenia of childhood	117		

Myeloid proliferations associated with Down syndrome	169	Heavy chain diseases	237
Transient abnormal myelopoiesis associated with		Mu heavy chain disease	237
Down syndrome	169	Gamma heavy chain disease	238
Myeloid leukaemia associated with Down syndrome	170	Alpha heavy chain disease	240
<b>9 Blastic plasmacytoid dendritic cell neoplasm</b>	<b>173</b>	Plasma cell neoplasms	241
<b>10 Acute leukaemias of ambiguous lineage</b>	<b>179</b>	Non-IgM monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined	
Acute undifferentiated leukaemia	182	significance	241
Mixed-phenotype acute leukaemia with		Plasma cell myeloma	243
t(9;22)(q34.1;q11.2); <i>BCR-ABL 1</i>	182	Plasma cell myeloma variants	249
Mixed-phenotype acute leukaemia with t(v;11q23.3);		Smouldering (asymptomatic) plasma cell myeloma	249
<i>KMT2A</i> -rearranged	183	Non-secretory myeloma	250
Mixed-phenotype acute leukaemia, B/myeloid,		Plasma cell leukaemia	250
not otherwise specified	184	Plasmacytoma	250
Mixed-phenotype acute leukaemia, T/myeloid,		Solitary plasmacytoma of bone	250
not otherwise specified	185	Extraosseous plasmacytoma	251
Mixed-phenotype acute leukaemia, not otherwise specified,		Monoclonal immunoglobulin deposition diseases	254
rare types	186	Primary amyloidosis	254
Acute leukaemias of ambiguous lineage,		Light chain and heavy chain deposition diseases	255
not otherwise specified	187	Plasma cell neoplasms with associated	
		paraneoplastic syndrome	256
		POEMS syndrome	256
		TEMPI syndrome	257
<b>11 Introduction and overview of the classification of the</b>		Extranodal marginal zone lymphoma of mucosa-associated	
<b>    lymphoid neoplasms</b>	<b>189</b>	lymphoid tissue (MALT lymphoma)	259
<b>12 Precursor lymphoid neoplasms</b>	<b>199</b>	Nodal marginal zone lymphoma	263
B-lymphoblastic leukaemia/lymphoma,		Paediatric nodal marginal zone lymphoma	264
not otherwise specified	200	Follicular lymphoma	266
B-lymphoblastic leukaemia/lymphoma with recurrent		Testicular follicular lymphoma	268
genetic abnormalities	203	In situ follicular neoplasia	274
B-lymphoblastic leukaemia/lymphoma with		Duodenal-type follicular lymphoma	276
t(9;22)(q34.1;q11.2); <i>BCR-ABL 1</i>	203	Paediatric-type follicular lymphoma	278
B-lymphoblastic leukaemia/lymphoma with		Large B-cell lymphoma with <i>IRF4</i> rearrangement	280
t(v;11q23.3); <i>KMT2A</i> -rearranged	203	Primary cutaneous follicle centre lymphoma	282
B-lymphoblastic leukaemia/lymphoma with		Mantle cell lymphoma	285
t(12;21)(p13.2;q22.1); <i>ETV6-RUNX1</i>	204	Leukaemic non-nodal mantle cell lymphoma	290
B-lymphoblastic leukaemia/lymphoma with hyperdiploidy	205	In situ mantle cell neoplasia	290
B-lymphoblastic leukaemia/lymphoma with hypodiploidy	206	Diffuse large B-cell lymphoma (DLBCL), NOS	291
B-lymphoblastic leukaemia/lymphoma with		T-cell/histiocyte-rich large B-cell lymphoma	298
t(5;14)(q31.1;q32.1); <i>IGH/IL3</i>	206	Primary diffuse large B-cell lymphoma of the CNS	300
B-lymphoblastic leukaemia/lymphoma with		Primary cutaneous diffuse large B-cell lymphoma, leg type	303
t(1;19)(q23;p13.3); <i>TCF3-PBX1</i>	207	EBV-positive diffuse large B-cell lymphoma, NOS	304
B-lymphoblastic leukaemia/lymphoma, <i>BCR-ABL 1</i> -like	208	EBV-positive mucocutaneous ulcer	307
B-lymphoblastic leukaemia/lymphoma with <i>iAMP21</i>	208	Diffuse large B-cell lymphoma associated with	
T-lymphoblastic leukaemia/lymphoma	209	chronic inflammation	309
Early T-cell precursor lymphoblastic leukaemia	212	Fibrin-associated diffuse large B-cell lymphoma	311
NK-lymphoblastic leukaemia/lymphoma	213	Lymphomatoid granulomatosis	312
		Primary mediastinal (thymic) large B-cell lymphoma	314
<b>13 Mature B-cell neoplasms</b>	<b>215</b>	Intravascular large B-cell lymphoma	317
Chronic lymphocytic leukaemia/		ALK-positive large B-cell lymphoma	319
small lymphocytic lymphoma	216	Plasmablastic lymphoma	321
Monoclonal B-cell lymphocytosis	220	Primary effusion lymphoma	323
B-cell prolymphocytic leukaemia	222	HHV8-associated lymphoproliferative disorders	325
Splenic marginal zone lymphoma	223	Multicentric Castleman disease	325
Hairy cell leukaemia	226	HHV8-positive diffuse large B-cell lymphoma, NOS	327
Splenic B-cell lymphoma/leukaemia, unclassifiable	229	HHV8-positive germinotropic lymphoproliferative disorder	328
Splenic diffuse red pulp small B-cell lymphoma	229	Burkitt lymphoma	330
Hairy cell leukaemia variant	230	Burkitt-like lymphoma with 11q aberration	334
Lymphoplasmacytic lymphoma	232	High-grade B-cell lymphoma	335
IgM Monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance	236	High-grade B-cell lymphoma with <i>MYC</i> and <i>BCL2</i>	
		and/or <i>BCL6</i> rearrangements	335
		High-grade B-cell lymphoma, NOS	340

B-cell lymphoma, unclassifiable, with features intermediate between DLBCL and classic Hodgkin lymphoma	342	<b>16 Immunodeficiency-associated lymphoproliferative disorders</b>	<b>443</b>
<b>14 Mature T- and NK-cell neoplasms</b>	<b>345</b>	Lymphoproliferative diseases associated with primary immune disorders	444
T-cell prolymphocytic leukaemia	346	Lymphomas associated with HIV infection	449
T-cell large granular lymphocytic leukaemia	348	Post-transplant lymphoproliferative disorders (PTLD)	453
Chronic lymphoproliferative disorder of NK cells	351	Non-destructive PTLD	456
Aggressive NK-cell leukaemia	353	Polymorphic PTLD	457
EBV-positive T-cell and NK-cell lymphoproliferative diseases of childhood	355	Monomorphic PTLD (B- and T/NK-cell types)	459
Systemic EBV+ T-cell lymphoma of childhood	355	Monomorphic B-cell PTLD	459
Chronic active EBV infection of T- and NK-cell type, systemic form	358	Monomorphic T/NK-cell PTLD	461
Hydroa vacciniforme-like lymphoproliferative disorder	360	Classic Hodgkin lymphoma PTLD	462
Severe mosquito bite allergy	362	Other iatrogenic immunodeficiency-associated lymphoproliferative disorders	462
Adult T-cell leukaemia/lymphoma	363	<b>17 Histiocytic and dendritic cell neoplasms</b>	<b>465</b>
Extranodal NK/T-cell lymphoma, nasal type	368	Introduction	466
Intestinal T-cell lymphoma	372	Histiocytic sarcoma	468
Enteropathy-associated T-cell lymphoma	372	Tumours derived from Langerhans cells	470
Monomorphic epitheliotropic intestinal T-cell lymphoma	377	Langerhans cell histiocytosis	470
Intestinal T-cell lymphoma, NOS	378	Langerhans cell sarcoma	473
Indolent T-cell lymphoproliferative disorder of the gastrointestinal tract	379	Indeterminate dendritic cell tumour	474
Hepatosplenic T-cell lymphoma	381	Interdigitating dendritic cell sarcoma	475
Subcutaneous panniculitis-like T-cell lymphoma	383	Follicular dendritic cell sarcoma	476
Mycosis fungoides	385	Inflammatory pseudotumour-like follicular/fibroblastic dendritic cell sarcoma	478
Sézary syndrome	390	Fibroblastic reticular cell tumour	479
Primary cutaneous CD30-positive T-cell lymphoproliferative disorders	392	Disseminated juvenile xanthogranuloma	480
Lymphomatoid papulosis	392	Erdheim–Chester disease	481
Primary cutaneous anaplastic large cell lymphoma	395	<b>Contributors</b>	<b>484</b>
Primary cutaneous peripheral T-cell lymphomas, rare subtypes	397	<b>Declaration of interests</b>	<b>493</b>
Introduction	397	<b>Clinical Advisory Committees</b>	<b>494</b>
Primary cutaneous gamma delta T-cell lymphoma	397	<b>IARC/WHO Committee for ICD-O</b>	<b>496</b>
Primary cutaneous CD8-positive aggressive epidermotropic cytotoxic T-cell lymphoma	399	<b>Sources of figures and tables</b>	<b>497</b>
Primary cutaneous acral CD8-positive T-cell lymphoma	400	<b>References</b>	<b>504</b>
Primary cutaneous CD4+ small/medium T-cell lymphoproliferative disorder	401	<b>Subject index</b>	<b>577</b>
Peripheral T-cell lymphoma, NOS	403	<b>List of abbreviations</b>	<b>586</b>
Angioimmunoblastic T-cell lymphoma and other nodal lymphomas of T follicular helper (TFH) cell origin	407		
Angioimmunoblastic T-cell lymphoma	408		
Follicular T-cell lymphoma	411		
Nodal peripheral T-cell lymphoma with TFH phenotype	412		
Anaplastic large cell lymphoma, ALK-positive	413		
Anaplastic large cell lymphoma, ALK-negative	418		
Breast implant-associated anaplastic large cell lymphoma	421		
<b>15 Hodgkin lymphomas</b>	<b>423</b>		
Introduction	424		
Nodular lymphocyte predominant Hodgkin lymphoma	431		
Classic Hodgkin lymphoma	435		
Nodular sclerosis classic Hodgkin lymphoma	435		
Lymphocyte-rich classic Hodgkin lymphoma	438		
Mixed-cellularity classic Hodgkin lymphoma	440		
Lymphocyte depleted classic Hodgkin lymphoma	441		