



TOXIC TRUTH: **The Link Between Roundup® Weed Killer and Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma**

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Monsanto, the maker of the popular herbicide Roundup®, is faced with multiple allegations that exposure to glyphosate, the product's active ingredient, can lead to non-Hodgkin lymphoma. If you or someone you love has been diagnosed with this type of cancer after exposure to Roundup®, we at Chris Hudson & Associates can assist you in seeking compensation for your medical expenses, loss of income, and pain and suffering.

How Common Is Roundup®?

Roundup® is the world's most widely used weed killer. First introduced by Monsanto in 1974, it's used on commercial farms as well as in businesses and private homes to create attractive landscaping. The product works by blocking proteins essential to the growth of poison ivy, kudzu, dandelions, and other weeds.

Global usage of glyphosate, the primary ingredient in Roundup®, has increased 15-fold since 1996. This is attributed to the cultivation of what's known as "Roundup® Ready" crops, which are genetically modified to be resistant to the herbicide. Farmers have embraced the concept of being able to kill undesirable weeds without harming their crops, but the long-term consequences of this approach to the agricultural process are just now coming to light.

Today, almost all of the cotton, soy, and corn grown in the U.S. is treated with glyphosate. In 2015, *National Geographic* reported that over 1.4 billion pounds of the product are applied per year.

Glyphosate residue has been consistently detected in the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the food we eat. This means people are still exposed to the herbicide via dietary choices and their physical location, even if they are not directly applying Roundup® as a weed killer.

What Is Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma?

Non-Hodgkin lymphoma is one of the most common types of cancer in the United States. It accounts for about 4% of all cancer diagnoses and leads to about 20,000 deaths per year.

Non-Hodgkin lymphoma is a type of cancer that begins in white blood cells known as lymphocytes, which are an important part of the body's natural immune system. It most often affects adults and typically is first found in the lymph nodes, spleen, bone marrow, thymus, adenoids, tonsils, or digestive tract.

Symptoms of non-Hodgkin lymphoma include unexplained weight loss, fever, night sweats, fatigue, abdominal pain or swelling, and trouble breathing. Many people also experience painless, swollen lymph nodes in the neck, armpits, or groin.

Treatments for non-Hodgkin lymphoma can include chemotherapy, radiation, immunotherapy, targeted drug therapy, and stem cell transplants. However, in some cases where the patient is older, and the cancer appears to be very slow growing, regular monitoring may be recommended instead of a more aggressive treatment approach.

Patients with non-Hodgkin lymphoma are assigned a stage that indicates how far the cancer has progressed:

- **Stage I.** The cancer is in just one lymph node region or a group of nearby nodes.
- **Stage II.** The cancer has invaded one organ and the nearby lymph nodes or is in two lymph node regions, but is still confined to a section of the body either above or below the diaphragm.
- **Stage III.** The cancer has moved to lymph nodes both above and below the diaphragm.
- **Stage IV.** The cancer is in several portions of one or more organs and tissues, such as the lungs, liver, or bones.

What Is the Link Between Glyphosate and Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma?

Scientists are still struggling to understand what causes non-Hodgkin lymphoma. Autoimmune diseases, family history, and existing immune deficiencies appear to be risk factors, but there is also a substantial link between this type of cancer and environmental exposure to toxic chemicals such as glyphosate.

The earliest possible connection between glyphosate and cancer was noted in 1985 when the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) classified glyphosate as possibly carcinogenic to humans based on studies involving tumors in mice. The EPA changed the classification to evidence of non-carcinogenicity in humans in 1991, but noted glyphosate also caused DNA and chromosomal damage in human cells.

In 2015, the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) publicly stated glyphosate is "probably carcinogenic to humans." This designation means there is convincing evidence a substance causes cancer in animals, but information about the cancer risk in humans is uncertain.

The data on which the IARC based its conclusion was compelling enough to cause people who had been diagnosed with cancer after using Roundup® to question whether the company was responsible for their condition. The IARC warning also spurred a number of global investigations into the safety of Roundup®. Based on the findings, the French Prime Minister announced in 2017 that glyphosate products would be phased out over five years and banned by the beginning of 2022.

A recent study by a group of scientists from UC Berkeley, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, and the University of Washington examined the medical histories of people with the highest total exposures to glyphosate. They did not collect any new data; rather, they opted to merge the results from six earlier studies. This included a 2001 study published in *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention*, a 2003 study published in the journal *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, and a 2008 study in the *International Journal of Cancer*. They focused on individuals with the highest exposure levels, arguing that including people with low exposure to Roundup® creates a diluted risk estimate that could lead to the product being viewed as safer than it truly is.

The study's authors found that men and women with the highest exposure to the glyphosate in Roundup® had a 41% higher risk of developing non-Hodgkin lymphoma. Individuals with the highest exposure to Roundup® include farm workers, nursery workers, landscapers, and others who work with the chemical as part of their regular employment. "The overall evidence from human, animal, and mechanistic studies presented here supports a compelling link between exposures to GBHs [glyphosate-based herbicides] and increased risk for NHL," Luoping Zhang, Emaan Rana, Rachel M. Shaffer, Emanuela Taioli, and Lianne Sheppard wrote.

Although the link between glyphosate and non-Hodgkin lymphoma becomes stronger with prolonged exposure, there is still a statistically significant risk with just two days exposure to the chemical at least one year prior to diagnosis. This means that even part-time workers or casual home gardeners could be exposed to glyphosate at levels that would be high enough to lead to non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

The connection between Roundup® exposure and other types of cancer is still being explored, but it appears that glyphosate also increases the risk of leukemia, kidney cancer, bladder cancer, bone cancer, breast cancer, liver cancer, pancreatic cancer, and thyroid cancer.

Why Is Roundup® the Focus of Litigation?

Although it's true that other brands of products contain glyphosate, Roundup® has been the focus of litigation because Monsanto was the original inventor of the herbicide and held the patent for many years. Additionally, evidence suggests that added animal fats and other ingredients found in Roundup® increase the carcinogenicity of the glyphosate. For example, one in vitro study found eight out of nine major pesticides tested in complete formulations of Roundup® were up to 1,000 times more toxic to human cells than the individual active ingredients.

Reports have suggested that Monsanto has previously engaged in efforts to “kill” studies on the safety of glyphosate. The company continues to argue that Roundup® is safe and refuses to take precautions that might protect consumers from being diagnosed with a devastating illness. Legally, this presents a compelling argument for a negligent disregard for the safety of consumers.

Misleading advertising is also a concern. In fact, Monsanto was sued by the State of New York in 1996 for making claims that Roundup® was an environmentally-friendly product that was as safe as common table salt. The company eventually agreed to stop misleading advertising, but only within New York.

Today, a growing number of concerned environmentalists and individuals who believe Roundup® led to their cancer diagnosis fear misleading ads and Monsanto's efforts to discourage research into the safety of glyphosate are causing the public to take unnecessary risks with their health. In addition to seeking compensation for those who've been diagnosed with non-Hodgkin lymphoma, they're fighting to have Roundup® taken off the market to protect the health and wellbeing of future generations.

How Can I Protect My Legal Rights?

A diagnosis of non-Hodgkin lymphoma can have devastating effects. Many of the plaintiffs in Roundup® lawsuits have been forced to sell their family farms and deplete their 401(k) plans to pay for necessary cancer treatments. With their weakened immune systems, they're often unable to travel or attend events in public spaces. They rely on prescription painkillers to get through the day and worry about what the future will hold.

If you or a loved one are suffering from non-Hodgkin lymphoma that you believe is linked to Roundup® exposure, the best way to protect your legal rights is to seek the assistance of an attorney experienced in handling these types of complex product liability claims. Your attorney can assist you in taking action against Monsanto for the role the company played in your illness.

The court has already approved an informational sheet that all plaintiffs must fill out if they are planning to file a Roundup® lawsuit. This sheet asks individuals to provide a detailed health and occupational history. Since non-Hodgkin lymphoma does not occur naturally in the human body, proving a valid claim requires examining an individual's health and occupational history and using a process of elimination to determine whether the condition was caused by exposure to Roundup® or some other carcinogen.

Potential damages from a Roundup® lawsuit include:

- Medical expenses, including anticipated future medical care
- Lost wages, including loss of future earning potential
- Out-of-pocket expenses related to the cancer diagnosis, such as transportation to medical appointments
- Pain and suffering
- Funeral and burial costs (if you're filing a wrongful death claim due to a family member's cancer)
- Loss of a loved one's care and companionship (if you're filing a wrongful death claim due to a family member's cancer)
- Punitive damages (intended to punish Monsanto for its negligence in failing to protect Roundup® users from harm)

Every case is different, but the damages in this type of claim can be substantial. In August 2018, a jury ordered Monsanto to pay a man who believed his non-Hodgkin lymphoma was linked to Roundup® exposure from working as a school groundskeeper in California \$289 million in damages. There are over 5,000 similar lawsuits pending across the United States.

Will I Be Part of a Class Action Lawsuit?

Sometimes, lawsuits against the manufacturer of a dangerous product are filed as a class action claim. A class action is a type of lawsuit where a group of people is represented collectively throughout the legal process. A few representative plaintiffs make decisions that affect all members of the group.

At Chris Hudson & Associates, we handle Roundup® claims as mass torts. In a mass tort lawsuit, individuals who have suffered similar damages come together for purposes of legal discovery and trial preparation. However, each case is still a unique legal action.

Decisions in your case will be made based on what is in your best interests, so you don't need to worry about fighting to have your specific concerns properly addressed in a class action lawsuit. Your claim will be considered on its individual merits, and you will maintain the sole authority to accept or deny a proposed settlement offer.

Can I Afford to Hire an Attorney?

Often, when someone is ill and unable to work, the cost of legal representation is a concern. However, Chris Hudson & Associates accepts cases on a contingency fee basis. This means we'll agree to accept a percentage of the final settlement you receive as the fee for our services.

There is no upfront cost to having our skilled legal team advocate for your right to compensation for the damages you have suffered. We will establish liability, document damages, and negotiate on your behalf for the highest possible settlement. This will allow you to focus on your health and the needs of your family.

Contact Us Today to Find Out How We Can Help

If you've been diagnosed with non-Hodgkin lymphoma after exposure to Roundup®, we want to help. Our office is located in Augusta, but we're proud to serve clients throughout Georgia and South Carolina. Contact us today to schedule a free, no-obligation initial consultation to learn more about how we can assist you and your family in obtaining the compensation you need to deal with the effects of a non-Hodgkin lymphoma diagnosis.

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