

Find out more about Updates on Myeloma

Tuesday
January 21, 2014

Meet our guest speaker **Robert Z. Orlowski, MD, PhD**



Myeloma Expert to Share the Latest Advances from the ASH® Annual Meeting

“The American Society of Hematology (ASH®) Annual Meeting brings together researchers from around the world to discuss the most exciting new research in hematologic diseases, including myeloma.”

explains **Dr. Robert Z. Orlowski from The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center**. Dr. Orlowski recently returned from the 2013 ASH® Annual Meeting and he will share the latest advances in myeloma during The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society’s (LLS) upcoming telephone/web education program on Tuesday, January 21, 2014.

Dr. Orlowski explains that among the promising myeloma research discussed at ASH were presentations on new drugs with completely new mechanisms of action against myeloma. “Just one of the many themes emphasized at ASH was the impressive potential role of monoclonal antibodies in myeloma.” Monoclonal antibodies are targeted therapies that attach to proteins expressed on cancer cells. “Two of these therapies, elotuzumab and daratumumab, have shown excellent activity against myeloma in early phase clinical trials, particularly when combined with lenalidomide and dexamethasone. The great advantage to these therapies is that they are engineered to only attach to myeloma cells, leaving most healthy cells untouched. They often have fewer side effects, which allows us to not only improve patient outcomes, but also quality of life.” Another new drug discussed at ASH, filanesib, targets a protein called kinesin spindle protein (KSP). In early clinical trials this drug has shown activity in patients whose disease did not respond to several prior therapies. Dr. Orlowski will discuss important updates on how best

to give existing myeloma therapies, new myeloma drug combinations, and other novel agents, including a new third-generation oral proteasome inhibitor. He will also explain how biomarkers are helping researchers determine what therapies are most likely to be effective in individual patients.

“Many of the most exciting drugs currently being studied are not yet FDA approved. The only way for patients to have access to them is to participate in clinical trials,” explains Dr. Orlowski. A cancer clinical trial is a carefully controlled research study conducted by doctors to improve the care and treatment of cancer patients. “Patients are often frustrated by the length of time it takes to get a new drug approved, and that is understandable. There are many steps in that process, but one very important step is patient participation in clinical trials. This is the only way we can find out if a new therapy is more effective or has fewer side effects than the therapies currently available. If we could increase the number of patients who participate in clinical trials, it could dramatically speed up the time needed to get a new drug approved.”

Dr. Orlowski encourages patients to visit the LLS website, www.lls.org, or call an Information Specialist at (800) 955-4572 to learn more about clinical trials, and to participate in the upcoming LLS telephone/web education program to learn about the latest advances in myeloma from the ASH Annual Meeting. “There is reason for a great deal of optimism for people with myeloma. This is a rapidly changing field and I expect that pace will continue. Patients need to be aware of their options, including clinical trials, so they can take full advantage of what is available to them,” says Dr. Orlowski.

REGISTER NOW

for the **FREE**
telephone/web
education program

Myeloma

Update on Research and Treatment from the American Society of Hematology (ASH®) Annual Meeting

This program is not sponsored, sanctioned by, or part of the 55th Annual Meeting of the American Society of Hematology (ASH®).

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm **Eastern Time**
12:00 pm to 1:30 pm **Central Time**
11:00 am to 12:30 pm **Mountain Time**
10:00 am to 11:30 am **Pacific Time**

There are two ways to register:

- 1 www.LLS.org/programs**
- 2 (866) 992-9950 ext. 304**

**Ask Dr. Orlowski
a question during the
Q&A session**

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Supported by grants from



Additional support

LLS has Information Specialists who are available to talk with you Monday through Friday between 9AM and 6PM ET. Just call (800) 955-4572 or email infocenter@LLS.org.

Myeloma Chat offers an online forum for open discussion with other myeloma patients and is facilitated by an oncology social worker. The chat is held every Tuesday evening.

Visit www.LLS.org/chat.

NEW! Caregiver Chat offers a forum for family members and friends to address the stresses and triumphs shared by those caring for someone with a blood cancer. The chat is held every Tuesday evening.

Visit www.LLS.org/chat.

Visit www.LLS.org/myelomaeducation to access virtual lectures, transcripts, program slides, and audio replays from past myeloma programs and free education materials.

Visit www.LLS.org/finances for financial information and assistance.

Visit www.LLS.org/copay for information on LLS' Co-Pay Assistance Program.

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Specialists offer
personalized
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Eileen, with her children Connie and Sammy

Survival story: Eileen Laferriere

LLS Volunteer Finds and Gives Support in Many Ways

Eileen Laferriere was running on a treadmill in April of 2011 when she had a sharp pain in her left arm. Thinking she was having a heart attack, she went to the emergency room. She explains, "The ER doctor came in and told me my heart was fine. The pain I had was simply a spasm from an earlier injury. He explained, however, that blood tests detected an elevated protein level in my blood which could be a symptom of myeloma. I had no idea what that was. When he told me it was a type of cancer I got what I describe as tunnel hearing. All I heard was cancer, and nothing he said after that made sense." Eileen went to her car, and called her ex-husband, who is an oncology nurse. "He was and continues to be a tremendous support. He told me, 'An elevated

protein could be many things, but even if this is myeloma, I know patients who have been living with myeloma for 20 years.'" Eileen, who is now 57 years old, had further tests which confirmed the myeloma diagnosis. Over the next year she had two autologous stem cell transplants, and is now on a maintenance dose of lenalidomide and in remission.

Shortly after her diagnosis, Eileen's oncologist referred her to a local LLS myeloma support group. Eileen explains, "This has been a wonderful support for me. I've met a very positive group of people and we've become very close."

About a year ago, she received an email about an opportunity for online support, the **Myeloma Chat**. Eileen, who works full-time from home, says the convenience of the online chat appealed to her. "I've been participating every Tuesday evening since I learned about the chat. I simply log in from my laptop at home. I've learned a lot about the disease and the treatments, but it's more than just education. Because the chat is anonymous, it makes it an easy forum to share your feelings. The chat facilitator, an oncology social worker, provides support and helpful resources. If you're recently diagnosed, it can help to hear how others felt when they were first diagnosed versus how they're feeling now. There are people on the chat who have had myeloma for more than nine years; just knowing there are people out there with that longevity can make a big difference in your outlook about the disease."

Eileen feels it is important to be educated about her treatment options and also to educate others about myeloma and available resources. Eileen volunteers at her LLS chapter, doing office work and providing LLS resources at local health fairs. Adrianna Cole, the Patient Access, Education & Advocacy Manager at Eileen's LLS chapter in Texas explains, "Volunteers like Eileen are invaluable to LLS. They help us get the word out that LLS is here to provide education, resources and support from the moment someone is diagnosed with a blood cancer."

Eileen's advice to others diagnosed with myeloma? "Reach out for support. My ex-husband, my children, and the people in my LLS support groups and my online Chat, have all been a great help to me. Get the right medical team behind you. If you trust your team and believe they are doing the right thing for you, it helps your confidence in fighting this disease. Keep busy and help others when you can. Most importantly, plan for the future and all possibilities, but live life for right now."

"Because the chat is anonymous, it makes it an easy forum to share your feelings."