



Patient Power

Cognitive Impact of Myeloma Treatment: What Do Studies on Chemo Brain Reveal?

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Audience Member:

Yes. I'm Mark Davis, and I'm a high-risk smoldering myeloma patient of Dr. Lonial's for 63 months. Take 25 milligrams of lenalidomide (Revlimid). I'm curious as to whether there's any research being done on the cognitive effects of Revlimid and the other drugs used to treat myeloma. In other words, are there any studies like with neuropsychologists to study chemo brain and things of that sort?

Jack Aiello:

So before I ask Dr. Kaufman to answer your question, can you say a little bit about what it means to be high-risk smoldering because that's a different definition than high-risk myeloma?

Dr. Kaufman:

Right. When we talked earlier about high-risk myeloma we were really talking about genetic subsets. And it was briefly mentioned earlier, not all smoldering patients are the same. Some smoldering patients we would predict never develop myeloma, and some smoldering patients, i.e. those that are high-risk, there are certain high-risk features, are much more likely to develop myeloma. And so those patients that have high-risk smoldering, there have been a lot of studies in myeloma including looking at Revlimid to prevent the development of myeloma.

So getting back to the question, I think that the cognitive impact, the negative cognitive impact of long-term Revlimid use is hugely understudied, and we hear about it all the time, but there's not been a lot of good data available that really understands why it occurs. But I think it's certainly a very good question that needs to be addressed.

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