



Supplements, Diet and CLL

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La Verne Abe Harris, PhD
Patient Advocate

Shailja Amin, PA-C
Certified Physician Assistant
Banner MD Anderson Cancer Center

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Andrew Schorr:

Okay. Let's talk about supplements and diet for a second with you.

So I go to the mall. There's the health food store. They have big signs, boost your immune system. And I know I'm worried about that. And then there is some really nice person that works there and says, "You should take this. This is the secret immune booster that you'll never hear about anywhere but from me. But you should spend \$20.00 or \$50.00 or whatever for it." So what do you tell people about supplements? And I know we'll have more questions about it. Maybe diet as well because my wife had me—I couldn't drink coffee anymore. She said she read that somewhere. I had to have distilled water.

And she was making vegetarian stuff. And it wasn't until years later that I even had a steak. So what do you tell people about that?

Shailja Amin:

So I tell patients and caregivers and everyone diet is important for everybody. Having a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, exercise, all those things combined is healthy.

As far as supplements goes, unfortunately, none of these supplements have been tested in a randomized full trial where we can say, yes, this magic supplement worked best for a large number of people. And a lot of the times, if you start supplements, and you're on treatment, we don't know where the side effects are coming from. We don't know if, for example, the liver enzymes start to jump. We don't know if that's the treatment versus any type of supplement. And in everything, do in moderation. There are views about green tea extract. There are views about asparagus juice, things like that. Of course, don't be downing asparagus juice all day long, but in moderation to complement the diet is important.

Andrew Schorr:

La Verne, did you do any of this?

Dr. Harris:

I actually did. But what I did is I don't believe in alternative medicine. I believe in complementary, because I believe in traditional medicine. And I think my complementary medicinal items were things like doing tai chi and doing yoga. I had Reiki treatments done. I do meditation every day. But I'm also B12 and D3 depleted. So I do take those supplements.

Andrew Schorr:

But you talk to your doctor about it. They know.

Dr. Harris:

My doctor knows everything that I take and every amount that I take. And he knows exactly what brand I take. And so it's very important because you don't know what kind, because it has not been tested like a normal drug would be, you don't know what the implications are.

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