



Understanding Monoclonal Antibodies

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Andrew Schorr:

So let's move on beyond chemotherapy then. We understand what that is. So then, let's talk about the treatments that are out there.

And I believe, in all of these cases, these are approved in the U.S. So we have alemtuzumab (Lemtrada™), lenalidomide (Revlimid®), which has really been a myeloma drug. But I know, Dr. Ferrajoli, you've been very involved in that related to CLL. rituximab (Rituxan®), which was the drug I had. That's the R in FCR or R in **R Chop**. Ofatumumab (Arzerra®) and obinutuzumab (Gazyva®), these are monoclonal antibodies, as is rituximab. So these are I think of them, Dr. Ferrajoli, as cruise missiles. They're honing in on something on the CLL cell, right? Is that a good way to see it as far as the monoclonal antibodies?

Dr. Ferrajoli:

Yes. I think they can also be called a highlighter in the sense that when you are reading a passage, and you want to highlight something. They make the CLL cells to stand out. And then everything that you give together works better to eliminate that.

Andrew Schorr:

Okay. And you often use those drugs in combination with something else.

Dr. Ferrajoli:

Yes.

Andrew Schorr:

Like lenalidomide, you've been one of the primary researchers in that. And you'll meet someone who has had lenalidomide, Susan. And so lenalidomide you'll often use with what?

Dr. Ferrajoli:

We often use it in combination with the rituximab, because it is more effective and also better tolerated when it's used in combination.

Andrew Schorr:

Okay. That's sort of some people call it R-squared maybe?

Dr. Ferrajoli:

Yeah.

Andrew Schorr:

Because it's Revlimid and rituximab.

Dr. Ferrajoli:

And R-squared is also used in mantle cell lymphoma and other kinds of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

Andrew Schorr:

And let me tell you, the acronyms these guys use can drive you crazy. R-CHOP, R-squared, FCR, whatever. And it's sort of quick for them, because they deal with this every day. That's their lingo. So but don't let it bug you.

The point is you need to get the treatment that's right for you. So what we have there are different kinds of treatments that are approved. Again, it has to be personalized for you.

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