

Recap of Central New Jersey Multiple Myeloma Support Group Meeting of June 7, 2017:

We had a guest speaker for this meeting. Dr. Jack Watkins, a Community Hematology Liaison for Bristol-Myers Squibb discussed EMPLICITI (elotuzumab), a recently approved, first-of-its-kind, immunotherapy drug for treating multiple myeloma. EMPLICITI is used in combination with REVLIMID (lenalidomide) and dexamethasone in patients who have received 1 to 3 prior multiple myeloma treatments.

EMPLICITI is a type of immunotherapy that is different from traditional chemotherapy treatments. Unlike traditional chemotherapy treatments, EMPLICITI works with your own immune system to fight multiple myeloma. It works in 2 ways. It activates a key type of white blood cell in your immune system, called a Natural Killer (NK) Cell. EMPLICITI also identifies myeloma cells so they are more easily recognized by NK Cells. That way, activated NK Cells can find myeloma cells to destroy.

Ongoing clinical studies have shown that EMPLICITI in combination with REVLIMID and dexamethasone is more effective than REVLIMID and dexamethasone without EMPLICITI.

Of course, as with all new drugs, there can be side effects and you should follow the recommendations of your health care team. Additional information can be found at www.empliciti.com.

Other items of interest:

- As is our custom, we will not have a meeting in July. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, August 2nd.
- At our meeting on Wednesday, there was a question and some discussion of CAR T-Cell Therapy which we didn't have time to fully explore. Anyone interested might want to read Dr. Brian Durie's blog on the subject "CAR-T-Cell Therapy: Separating the Hype from the Hope".

Does immune cellular therapy with CAR T-cells offer a potentially curative approach for myeloma? That's what this week's flurry of news articles from the 2017 Annual Meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) seemed to suggest. But not so fast, cautions IMF Chairman Dr. Brian Durie in his blog this week: "It is way too soon, in my opinion, for such suggestions, both in terms of treatment benefit and toxicities and/or side effects." [Read Dr. Durie's blog.](#)

- There was also a lot of interest in clinical trials at our last meeting. You can search for clinical trials that may be of interest to you at <https://clinicaltrials.gov/>

- Many of you participated in or donated to the **Miracles for Myeloma 5K Run/Walk** which has been held for the past several years to raise money for research to find a cure for multiple myeloma. It is a fun day and we raise a lot of money – last year over \$100,000 - which goes directly to support researchers working on finding a cure for multiple myeloma. This year, the Fifth Annual Miracles for Myeloma event will be held on the morning of Saturday, September 23rd at Oak Ridge Park in Clark, NJ, the same location as prior years. Oak Ridge Park is a beautiful venue for this event. For those of you who are ready to join our team as a runner, or as a walker, or to make a donation, just go to <http://give.myeloma.org/miracles2017> . Be sure to state that you want to join the **Central Jersey Memorial Team**.

- We were fortunate to have won the raffle for the Somerset County suite at the Somerset Patriots ballgame on June 8th and a group of our members with family and friends attended the game. It was a great night for baseball. Attached is a photo of some of the group.

- The Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation has announced a series of three webinars over the next three months on "Clinical Advances in Immunotherapy in Myeloma: Monoclonal Antibodies". This webinar series will describe how the immune system normally functions to protect the body and will highlight how new immune therapies such as
 - Monoclonal antibodies

- Cancer vaccines
- Engineered immune cells

can be effective treatments for multiple myeloma patients. Here's the link for further information and to register: <http://go.themmr.org/webmail/230662/24317587/bef9a50850c2c91c43013d8d3c0902c24dfbbeb04b8ce43ec9ccb18543a3dc6b>

- Watch a replay of last week's "Living Well with Myeloma" webinar on Nutrition. Hosted by Kylie Buchan of Savor Health, the talk covers the importance of nutrition, management of treatment-related side effects, food safety, multiple myeloma complications, and survivorship.
- The IMF publishes a monthly newsletter that contains a wealth of useful information. The latest edition is included as an attachment.
- The MMFR is reporting new and interesting information for patients from the 2017 American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Conference

Topics include:

- Advances in Immune Therapy
- Optimizing stem cell transplant
- Controlling side effects from therapy

To learn more go to: <https://www.themmr.org/asco-2017-monday-blog/>

While we will not be meeting in July, we will be monitoring our email. So, if you have any issues or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us by email.

Our email address is CentralNJ@IMFsupport.org.

Our website is CentralNJ.support.myeloma.org.

We hope to see you at our next meeting on Wednesday, August 2nd.

Your Central New Jersey Multiple Myeloma Support Group Steering Committee