

MM Fighters! Support Group Meeting
September 25, 2021
Virtual Meeting

Dr. Sarah Lee from the SCCA spoke to the group on **Thriving and Surviving with Myeloma**, an important topic for Myeloma patients in any stage of treatment. Dr. Lee was also kind enough to join our Patient Roundtable during the second hour, and provided some interesting insights and answers.

For those of you who were unable to attend the meeting, or if you wish to review the presentation, we also recorded Dr. Lee's presentation.

Thought For The Month

Treasure every moment, for

Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory.

Speaker

Dr. Lee's presentation was not just for those who are starting their Myeloma journey, but also contained helpful information for the many "Myeloma veterans" out there. Please take the time to review her slides and/or listen to her presentation, as I am sure you will find some suggestions that will help in dealing with the many obstacles we face.

Dr. Lee began by reviewing the members of our Support Team, and emphasized the importance of having an expert helping to guide your treatment. Myeloma is a tricky disease with advancements being announced frequently, and oncologists that are treating a number of cancers do not have the time to stay on top of this field. The slides that detail some of the treatments for Myeloma, as well as the various relapse scenarios that patients can face make this clear.

Dr. Lee also reviewed the importance of your PCP in coordinating care when you are in remission, as your everyday healthcare concerns also need to be addressed. Other key players are the nurses, who are a storehouse of knowledge on this disease and side effects, as well as Palliative Care specialists, who can help treat the pain the often comes with this disease. (And she will be adding Support Groups as a valuable part of your support team!)

Whichever doctor you are seeing, Dr. Lee stressed that you need to be your own advocate. Understand your tests and prepare important questions for your visits, as you only have limited time to be with your care team.

The slides also include suggestions regarding how to negotiate remission and relapse of your Myeloma, focusing on a healthy lifestyle, immune protection as well as mental health. Two great slides at the end of the presentation detail the resources that are available to patients at the SCCA in case you are facing challenges, and I know that Swedish also has a robust team supporting patients. Wherever you are being treated, do look into what support is available now, for when you need assistance, you will not want to use time investigating such information!

Dr. Lee's slides are attached to this email, and the video of her presentation can be found at

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oiNX3iObem6vic5gpWsxVud1Dz5B9y69/view?usp=sharing>

This is set up to view online, as it is over 1 hour in length and is too heavy to download. Please let Mari know if you are having any difficulties viewing the presentation – her email is marihattori@gmail.com.

Patient Roundtable

Once again, discussion centered around the threat that the COVID poses to immune compromised patients. Many patients shared how they were handling various situations, such as staying away from indoor restaurants and/or shopping, or not allowing unvaccinated people into their homes. The common theme was to do what you are comfortable with, while at the same time minimizing risks. Patients face a much greater risk than vaccinated people, and having patience and taking care of ourselves as well as those around us is key.

We had several first time members join our call, introducing themselves and their journey to this point. All seem to be doing quite well, and we welcome them to our "family"! Erica also introduced the Transplant Group to the new members as at least one is approaching the start of his stem cell transplant.

Dave called with the Long Beach Grand Prix roaring in the background. After the back and leg pain he faced, he is now up to over 10,000 steps a day. Guess it helps your motivation to walk on beaches in CA! Great to hear of this progress!

Ruth mentioned that Bastyr will be having a Cancer Wellness School presentation on naturopathic solutions to some of cancer's challenges. Unfortunately, this was canceled, but presentations will be recordings of these presentations available on the Bastyr Community Continuing Education website. There will be a low fee for the content. Please visit their website for more information.

Kathy was having some difficulties understanding some of the test results that she was receiving, and Dr. Lee assisted in this area.

Next MM Fighters! Meeting:

October 9th, 2021 – IMF Regional Workshop for Washington State – 10AM – 12:30 PM – Virtual Meeting

Saturday, October 23rd, 2021 – 10 AM – 12:30 PM – Brian McMahon, Sparkcures, Clinical Trials – Virtual Meeting

November 13th, 2021 – 10AM – 12:30 PM – Dr. Libby, SCCA – All Questions Myeloma - Virtual Meeting