

MM Fighters! Support Group Meeting
April 27, 2024
Virtual Meeting

We had our second Hybrid meeting of the year, and this one progressed much more smoothly than the first, thanks to the assistance of Mari, Yih, Jon, Mary Beth and Bud (and Yolanda who was there in spirit!) who helped to test the system earlier in the week. Although some members experienced a couple of technical challenges with Zoom (echoes, etc., which we are looking into) we could all see and hear each other, which was a big improvement!

Special thanks also go out to Mari, Yih, Bud and George for showing up early to help prep the room and to welcome members when they arrived. Of course, we must also thank Jon and Mary Beth who were kind enough to bring coffee to meeting to help keep everyone energized! I greatly appreciate their support, for we could not operate as well as we do without these wonderful volunteers!

Dr. Kwok from the UW/FHCC was our speaker, and she shared a great deal of information on two precursor conditions of Multiple Myeloma, MGUS and Smoldering Myeloma. She shared some surprising facts about these conditions as well as the latest findings on when treatment is recommended. Please see Dr. Kwok's slides as well as the link to a video of her presentation, which are attached to the accompanying email.

Thought for the Month

Do all the good you can, for all the people you can, in all the ways you can, as long as you can.

A great motto to live by, especially in these turbulent times!

There is still plenty of time to join **Defeat Myeloma**, a fundraiser that supports MM research at the Fred Hutch. We have a good number of MM Fighters at this event each year, and look forward to you joining the crowd! And it is FREE to all Myeloma patients! Please sign up at www.defeatmyeloma.org, and if you can, consider donating to the MM Fighters team to support research on our disease!

Patient Roundtable

Two MM Fighters were in the hospital last month – Mark H. for a CarT and Michael P. for a Bispecific treatment. Both are at home now, and are doing well!

It was great to see Joyce at our meetings and to learn about how she is doing. Despite a number of challenges, both on the treatment front and in her life, she is going strong and continuing to live life to the fullest.

Mary R. continues to improve from the challenges associated with her SCT, but discovered that she has less than 1 in a million MM cells from her latest MRD test! Some great news! She is moving onto her maintenance therapy next month.

Delda J. is still going strong after her SCT last July.

Mary T joined us for the first time and will be starting her initial treatment this week. She is a bit concerned about possible side effects from Dara, but members assured her that the nurses will be there to help ease her anxiety.

Dorothy H. is being challenged with a second disease, a very aggressive liver cancer. She is getting a bone marrow biopsy this Wednesday to determine the state of her MM, which will help the doctors to make some treatment decisions. Best of luck to her and do send Dorothy your best wishes!

Jan G. has a strong response to his initial treatment but decided not to pursue a stem cell transplant despite his cells being harvested. He has progressed to maintenance medications and is doing well.

Chris B. was the “lucky” recipient of a Covid rebound, so was not able to attend the meeting in person. This of course happened at the last minute, but thanks to the volunteers mentioned above, the meeting was able to proceed smoothly. He is doing well but waiting for his isolation period to end!

Dave B. just had his 105th Dara infusion (7 years 4 months on this drug!!!) and enjoying his role as a Myeloma Coach.

Heidi O. is starting a new treatment and slowly adjusting to the different side effects that come with this combination. The doctors are adjusting the doses to help eliminate these pesky challenges.

Bek, who has had Smoldering MM since 2017, unfortunately must progress to MM treatments in a couple of months. He is still doing well and feeling good, and has the strong mental outlook needed to deal with this change.

Linda T. just tested positive for Covid yesterday after a series of travel adventures. Her Myeloma is still behaving, and she is able to space out her labs to once every two months.

Next MM Fighters! Meetings:

Caregivers Meeting – Saturday, May 4th – 10 – 11:30 AM Contact mmfighters.caregivers@gmail.com for more information – **Virtual Meeting**

Living Alone With Myeloma – Saturday, May 4th – 9 AM – Contact heidolsen6308@gmail.com for more information – **Virtual Meeting**

Support Group Meeting – Saturday, May 18th – Ins and Outs of Medicare – Scott Erickson – 10AM – 12:30 PM – **Virtual Meeting**