



“Providing an opportunity for multiple myeloma patients and their loved ones to come together to exchange information for mutual support, comfort, and friendship”

Meeting: Tuesday December 18, 2018 3:30pm – 5:30pm
451 Junction Road
Madison, WI
UW West Clinic Room 1287

Enter the clinic... turn left and walk down a short hall...turn left again and conference room 1287 is the last one on the left.

Group Information:

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Madison Multiple Myeloma Support Group website
madisonmultiplemyeloma.org

Mailing Address: Wisconsin Multiple Myeloma Support Group
3309 Chicago Avenue Madison, WI 53714-1815

Information Sources :

International Myeloma Foundation (IMF)
Phone: 800 - 452 - 2873
Email: TheIMF@myeloma.org
Website: www.myeloma.org

Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation(MMRF)
Phone: 203 - 972 - 1250
Email: info@themmrf.org
Website: www.multiplemyeloma.org

Upcoming Meeting Speakers... **Mark your calendars now!**

Dr Sara Christensen Holz, Associate Professor Dept of Orthopedics and Rehabilitation will be our featured speaker February 2019. I have asked her to talk about balance issues and neuropathy.

Our December 18th meeting speaker is Carly Borchert, Clinical Nurse Consultant-Milwaukee District, Cellegene Corporation. Carly will present “The Myeloma Central Tour” and speak briefly about the Myeloma Crowd. Don't miss this special meeting.

The IMF will present highlights from the 60th ASH Annual Meeting & Exposition held in San Diego, California Dec 1-4, 2018

Save the Date: January 10th, 2019 Best of ASH 2018: What patients and Caregivers Need to Know. More info to follow.

- **FDA Weighs in On Immune Therapies**

Written by: Brian GM Durie MD

On Wednesday, November 7, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced the [approval of elotuzumab \(Empliciti®\)](#) by intravenous injection in combination with pomalidomide and dexamethasone (EPd) for treatment of relapsed or refractory myeloma in patients who have received at least two prior therapies, including lenalidomide and a proteasome inhibitor.

Combination yields excellent results

Patients given the EPd combination in the ELOQUENT-3 randomized trial, which compared EPd with Pd (Pomalidomide/dex) alone, experienced excellent benefits and no unexpected safety signals. In the study of 117 patients with relapsed or refractory myeloma, the progression-free survival (PFS: remission length) was 10.3 months with EPd versus 4.7 months with Pd alone. The overall response rate (ORR: >50% reduction in myeloma protein level) was also improved (53.3% versus 26.3%). The number of patients achieving very good partial response (VGPR: 90% or greater reduction in myeloma protein level) was 20% versus 8.8%. No new safety signals emerged, and the occurrence of infusion reactions was minimal.

In summary, this new EPd regimen is an important option for patients with relapsed or refractory myeloma. In addition, the tolerance and safety are particularly encouraging.

FDA cautions about new immunotherapy combinations

Fortunately, EPd is an effective and safe combination. However, unexpected toxicities with the pembrolizumab (or Keytruda) Pd combination raised a red flag about potential new risks with novel combinations. In their article, Drs. Gormley and Pazdur discuss in detail what happened with pembrolizumab, including the safety alert and the hold placed on all myeloma clinical trials in which pembrolizumab was combined with a thalidomide analogue (Revlimid® or Pomalyst®) because of serious heart, lung, and other toxicities. They note that more elderly and/or frail myeloma patients may be at a greater risk of complications. Also, since myeloma itself is associated with significant immune dysfunction, greater caution is required to assess the impact of powerful new combinations in both the shorter and longer term.

Bottom line

Great news about the EPd combination—but experts caution that careful evaluation of each new combination is required to avoid expected toxicities.

MMRF introduces MyDRUG clinical trial.....

When MMRF launched the **CoMMPass Study** in 2011, they saw a future where multiple myeloma patients are precisely treated based on their genetic mutations and other unique aspects of their cancer. This lifesaving approach to treatment, known as Precision Medicine, is now reality.

Through CoMMPass, we learned that multiple myeloma is not just one disease. Multiple myeloma is made up of at least 12 different sub-types, each of which is defined by specific genetic mutations and other abnormalities that affect how the disease responds to specific treatments.

The **MyDRUG (Myeloma – Developing Regimens Using Genomics)** clinical trial turns these learnings into action. Conducted by the MMRF and led by Dr. Shaji Kumar of the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., this groundbreaking cancer research study will test drugs designed specifically for each sub-

type, greatly improving the odds that the treatment will be beneficial.

Unlike traditional clinical trials, which test one drug or a single combination of drugs, the MyDRUG clinical trial studies the impact of several different drugs that target the genetic mutations and other molecular abnormalities identified in CoMMpass. This kind of clinical trial, known as a platform study, not only has the potential to accelerate the speed by which new treatments are tested, also more efficiently matches patients to treatments that are most likely to work. It is the first and only clinical trial of its kind in multiple myeloma.

More information at ClinicalTrials.gov

For those folks considering a year end contribution... The Trillium Research Fund is the way to go! All money goes for Myeloma research right here at the UW Carbone Cancer Center. They are in the midst of the most amazing work. See the end of this newsletter for information on where to send your contribution.

IMF Info Line – If you or someone you care for has Myeloma, you have questions. Probably, lots of them. You can search the Internet all you want, but other than asking your doctor, there is no better way to get your questions answered than to call the IMF Info Line. Missy, Judy and Paul know their stuff and they want to share what they know with you. Just ask anyone who has called the IMF Info Line. Patients or caregivers are welcome to contact the Info Line staffed by trained specialists at 800-452-CURE (800-452-2873). The Info Line is staffed between 9am and 4pm Pacific Time, 11am to 6pm Central time or infoline@myeloma.org.

The Trillium Fund was established by our founding support group members to facilitate Multiple Myeloma research here in Madison at the Wisconsin Institute of Medical Research. If you or your family wish to donate or send a memorial to this program, checks can be made payable to the “UW Foundation – Trillium Fund”. Sean Lynch Director of Development UW Carbone Cancer Center University of Wisconsin Foundation 1848 University Ave Madison, WI 53726 (608) 422-1714 cell sean.lynch@supportuw.org

www.mycarbone.org has been established as an easier way to contribute. Check it out!