



Patient Power

What Are the Long-Term Effects of Myeloma Treatment?

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Audience Member:

Well, I've been on lenalidomide (Revlimid), 15 milligrams a day for two weeks and then off for two weeks for 11 years, and I don't know what end product thing of this could be. Could it be damaging to my body? I'm closely watched at Emory. I go once a month and we do the blood work, the urine and everything, and I feel wonderful about the care I've gotten there, but sometimes I wonder about the medication.

Jack Aiello:

So, Dr. Kaufman, do we know long-term effects of Revlimid?

Dr. Kaufman:

The big concern about maintenance Revlimid has been the increase in what's called second primary malignancies, other cancers. We know after treatment of myeloma stem cell transplant there's risk of other cancers developing, and there is a small but—and real risk, increased risk with Revlimid with second, with other cancers, the development of other cancers. But being on it for a very long period of time hasn't been shown to be the reason these other cancers develop. It's mostly when you mix certain types of drugs together that these other cancers develop.

Now, having said that, having myeloma, now that patients are living a long time, having myeloma or being on Revlimid doesn't protect you from getting other cancers, and everybody should still do their age-appropriate screening for other cancers.

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