



Mesothelioma: Do the Statistics Lie?

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What patients hear when diagnosed with mesothelioma

- “You’re incurable”
- “No effective treatments”
- “Talk to your priest” (or rabbi etc)
- “Get your affairs in order”

Patient #1

- Diagnosed with pleural mesothelioma 11/06 at age 56, otherwise healthy
- No known prior asbestos exposure
- Found to have mesothelioma in abdominal lymph nodes removed by laparoscopy...felt not to be a candidate for aggressive surgical resection of pleural disease
- Receive 6 cycles of Alimta and cisplatin chemotherapy with improvement in his chest
- After reconsideration, extrapleural pneumonectomy and photodynamic therapy performed by Dr. Friedberg and Dr. Hahn 8/07
- Has required no therapy since then
- Working, traveling, got to see his youngest son enter college

Patient #2

- 76yo male diagnosed with pleural mesothelioma in 1994
- Workplace asbestos exposure over 35 years
- Treated on a phase I trial of gene therapy at Penn in 1995 by Dr. Sterman
- Pleurectomy and photodynamic therapy performed by Dr. Friedberg and Dr. Hahn in 1998
- Received 6 cycles of Alimta and cisplatin chemotherapy in 2006
- Phase II clinical trial of oral dasatanib in 2008
- Received 6 cycles of Alimta and carboplatin chemotherapy 4/09 to 8/09
- Currently off treatment, working on lowering his golf handicap

Patient #3

- 37yo woman diagnosed with left-sided pleural mesothelioma in 6/07
- Nonsmoker, no known asbestos exposure
- Left extrapleural pneumonectomy and photodynamic therapy performed by Dr. Friedberg and Dr. Hahn 7/07
- Received post-operative radiation to L chest, completed 11/07
- Received 4 cycles of post-operative Alimta and cisplatin chemotherapy, completed 3/08
- Found to have isolated recurrence in mediastinum 4/09
- Received 4 cycles Alimta and carboplatin 5/09-7/09
- Received IMRT during 3rd and 4th cycles of chemotherapy
- Recent CT scans clear
- Currently off treatment, taking care of her 3 children, including a 4yo and 3yo

Patient #4

- 66yo male diagnosed with R pleural mesothelioma in 1990
- Retired insurance agent, no known workplace asbestos exposure although his father was a naval yard worker
- Pleurectomy and intracavitary cisplatin and mitomycin C chemotherapy at Memorial Sloan-Kettering in 1990
- Received post-operative cisplatin and mitomycin chemotherapy
- Talc pleurodesis 1995 for recurrent pleural effusion
- Chest wall resection in 1996 for recurrence and post-operative radiation
- Right lower lobe lobectomy 2000
- Radiofrequency ablation to 2 chest wall nodules in 2007
- First visit with Dr. Sterman 6/08
- Currently off treatment, traveled to Europe twice this past summer

Other Incurable Diseases

- Diabetes
- Hypertension
- Emphysema
- Arthritis
- Congestive Heart Failure
- Kidney Failure

What Will Treatment Accomplish?

- Mesothelioma can be turned into a chronic disease
 - Multiple treatment modalities to be considered and used in combination
 - Prolonged periods off-treatment; “in remission”
 - Use of Alimta-based chemotherapy – less toxic and more effective than older agents
 - Novel drugs under active investigation – what about “maintenance therapy”?
- Treatment must be individualized
 - Every case of mesothelioma is unique
- Treatment should be delivered at centers with expertise/experience in mesothelioma
 - eg Penn!



Do the Statistics Lie?
YOU ARE NOT A STATISTIC
Yes!



Thank You For Coming Today

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