

Health Trends

People With Chemotherapy-Related Anemia Value Effective Therapy

(NAPSA)—New research into patient treatment preferences may mean good news for many of those with cancer. Consider the case of Dinah Day. She seemed to “have it all.” She had a series of successful careers as an actress, a sportscaster and a champion athlete. But her enviable and active lifestyle took a turn when she was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2002.

After her diagnosis, Day endured a lumpectomy and a mastectomy, followed by radiation and chemotherapy treatment. During chemotherapy, she felt the signs and symptoms of chemotherapy-related anemia—one of the most common side effects of that treatment. Everything from her career to her personal commitments needed to take a back seat to recovery. She simply did not have the strength to live life the way she used to.

“The fatigue from the anemia was extremely debilitating for me,” says Day. “I could not muster up the energy needed to get up and carry on my daily routine. What I needed was effective treatment to help me regain my strength.”

Affecting almost three-quarters of chemotherapy patients, anemia is a condition in which the body does not have enough red blood cells. A very common symptom of anemia is fatigue, or extreme tiredness. Others include weakness, paleness, shortness of breath, dizziness, lightheadedness, headaches, ringing in the ears, sleeplessness, impaired concentration and rapid heartbeat.

In selecting a treatment for chemotherapy-related anemia, it is important to look at all potential benefits and risks and available options. In fact, findings from a survey of cancer patients and their doctors evaluating patient preferences for effectiveness and convenience of anemia medications showed that effectiveness of treatment was more important to these



New research may help doctors understand cancer patients' treatment preferences.

patients than convenience. The survey defined effectiveness as the time to noticeable relief of fatigue, and convenience as the number of visits to the doctor's office during an eight-week period.

The patients surveyed noted that the time to noticeable relief of fatigue was almost twice as important than the number of visits to the doctor's office. Survey participants preferred to have medications that were effective in relieving the symptoms of anemia within a short period after starting treatment.

“Cancer patients struggling with chemotherapy-related anemia have multiple treatment options, so it is important they get the treatment they need to manage this condition,” said Corey Langer, MD, Medical Director, Thoracic Oncology, Fox Chase Cancer Center, Philadelphia, PA and Vice Chair, Radiation Therapy Oncology Group. “For people receiving chemotherapy and experiencing fatigue or exhaustion, it is important to speak with a health care professional to help find the most effective treatment options, based on their individual needs.”

For more information on chemotherapy-related anemia and treatments for the condition, go to www.cancer.com.