



## **The Basics of Managing Immune-Mediated Side Effects**

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### **TRANSCRIPT**

For patients receiving immunotherapy whether this is in combination with chemotherapy or immunotherapy alone one question we're often asked is "I don't feel any side-effects, how do I know if it's working?" In fact, the vast majority of patients who benefit from immunotherapy don't really have side-effects beyond fatigue, maybe a mild rash, or some mildly symptomatic or asymptomatic thyroid dysfunction. So, it's important to realize that just because you're not having the side-effects from immunotherapy doesn't mean you're not actually realizing the benefit. In fact, this represents an ideal scenario for our patients we want to have on these effective therapies for as long as possible living their lives with the highest quality of life.

One other point I'd like to make is that there has been a lot of news about the use of steroids and whether this may compromise efficacy of immunotherapy. The point that I want to make about these studies in particular is that these are patients who've been on steroids for months and months. Not patients who got steroids for contrast for their CTs or a couple days of steroids with their chemotherapy to prevent a rash or an infusion reaction and or if you have an immune related adverse event an autoimmune side-effect on immunotherapy. All these patients have been shown in various data sets to not have issues in terms of their immunotherapy efficacy.

So, I view steroid use the way I view antibiotic use for patients meaning doctors should minimize the use to the minimal effective shortest dose that takes care of the problem whether it's autoimmune inflammatory or whether it's infectious. That we should not be scared to use these very effective agents, but we should limit their use to the minimal effective dose.

But, for patients who are on steroids for much longer periods of time these may or may not be patients who need alternative therapeutic strategies potentially combining the immunotherapy with chemotherapy. I think more data is required in this setting.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mM-f7TICe70&feature=youtu.be>