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quality of life of patients, by taking care of symptoms such as nausea or pain, preventing complications such as weight and muscle mass loss, and by improving fatigue.

When cancer penetrates into bones and the bone marrow and causes local destruction, the use of zoledronate (Zometa®) has been demonstrated to reduce complications such as fractures. We presented results in 773 patients at the 2003 cancer meetings in Chicago. In this study, our center worked in cooperation with teams at McGill University in Canada, Weston Park Hospital in England, and other centers in the United States. We were able to offer this approach to our patients very early on; Zometa® is now commercially available.

We have been very active in anemia research and research on iron metabolism. We also participate in programs to relieve diarrhea, a common serious complication of chemotherapy, radiation, and other treatments. New programs for the treatment of breast cancer, colon cancer, rectal cancer, prostate cancer, kidney cancer, malignant lymphoma, leukemia, malignant melanoma, mesothelioma, lung cancer, and a variety of other tumor types and cancer-associated symptoms are part of what we do and offer daily to our patients.

Our most important objective is to make sure that our patients can be given the best currently available treatment. We also want to make sure that these treatments are delivered by an experienced team, so that we anticipate the effects of these interventions in order to protect the well-being and safety of the patients while enhancing the benefits. We want our patients to have access to appropriate clinical trials. We want to give our patients the best prescription today and the best possible prognosis for tomorrow.

Dr. Tchekmedyan is a practicing board certified internist and medical oncologist and Medical Director at PSMG, and a Fellow of the American College of Physicians. Dr. "T," as his patients and staff call him, is a Clinical Professor of Medicine at UCLA and has over 20 years of experience in oncology.

Dr. T is Associate Editor of the Journal Oncology and has contributed over 100 medical publications. He speaks five languages and has made invited presentations throughout the U.S. and in 20 countries abroad. Dr. T has been repeatedly featured in the list of America's Top Rated Physicians, including 2003, by the center for the Study of Services, based in Washington, D.C.

Scientific Publications – Sharing Information and Advancing the Field of Medicine

by Simon Tchekmedyan, M.D.

We contribute actively to the world of medical science by publishing about our experience and the results of our research programs. Here are some recent highlights we would like to share with our patients and colleagues:

We were among the main contributors to a major paper published on August 15, 2003, in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology* (*J Clin Oncol.* 2003 Aug 15;21(16):3150-7.) We reported a study of zoledronic acid (Zometa®) in patients with bone metastases (cancer spread to bones) due to various cancers. In this study of 773 patients, we demonstrated that Zometa® reduces the complications of bone metastases. This study included centers in the U.S. as well as several other countries. We also presented the long-term follow-up results of this study at the American Society of Clinical Oncology meetings in Chicago in June 2003. (*Proc Am Soc Clin Oncol* 22:page 630, 2003 [abstr 2532]).

We contributed a paper to the July 1, 2003, issue of the journal *Cancer* (*Cancer.* 2003 Jul 1;98(1):198-203.) addressing the relationship between psychologic distress and cancer-related fatigue. In this paper, we explored the relationships between changes in depression and anxiety levels and changes in fatigue levels among patients who had anemia and lung cancer. We found that improvements in fatigue levels were associated with improvements in anxiety and depression.

We have been involved in multiple publications regarding the results of research in anemia including two recent papers in the *British Journal of Cancer* (*Br J Cancer.* 2003 Jun 16; 88(12):1851-8) and (*Br J Cancer* 2002, July 29; 87(3):268-76).

We also participated in a publication in the *Journal Urology in June 2003* (*J Urol* 2003 Jun;169(6):2008-12.) where we studied the effects of zoledronic acid in the prevention of bone loss in men receiving hormonal therapy for prostate cancer. We had also published in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute in October 2002* (*J Natl Cancer Inst.* 2002 Oct 2;94(19):1458-68.) on the effects of zoledronic acid in patients with hormone refractory metastatic prostate cancer.

We have published several papers and made national and international meeting presentations on

studies on oxandrolone in the treatment of cancer-related weight loss. In addition to presentations at the American Society of Clinical Oncology Meetings (*Proc Am Soc Clin Oncol* 22, page 749, 2003 [abstract 3013]), we published results in the *International Journal of Radiation Oncology, Biology, and Physics in October 2003* (*Int J Radiat Oncol Bio Phys.* 2003 Oct 1;57(2 suppl):S283-4.) on this subject.

We published a paper on the effects of thalidomide on irinotecan-associated diarrhea in the *American Journal of Clinical Oncology in June 2002* (*Am J Clin Oncol.* 2002 Jun;25(3):324.). In September 2002, we published an entire issue in a supplement to the *Journal Oncology* (*Oncology.* 2002 Vol 16, No 9, Suppl 10) on the management of anemia in patients with cancer.

Overall, we have contributed over 20 scientific presentations and abstract publications over the last two years at various national and international oncology meetings. We published 15 abstracts of different research results in the proceedings of the American Society of Clinical Oncology for 2002 and 2003.

Our publications and research programs focus on many cancer-associated clinical conditions and tumor types including breast cancer, prostate cancer, colon and rectal cancer, kidney cancer, lymphoma and leukemia, malignant melanoma, lung cancer, mesothelioma, pancreatic cancer, gastric cancer, multiple myeloma, and many others. As an example, we currently have 15 active studies for breast cancer alone, including studies of gene characteristics of breast cancer in sisters, clinical trials for breast cancer prevention and treatment of early breast cancer, and new research programs for the treatment of various stages of advanced breast cancer. The depth and scope of this research effort should lead not only to a constant stream of new information and publications, but also to renewed hope that we will have better treatment options for our patients.



Quality of Life Symposia



Since 1989 we have held a series of national symposia on the subject of quality of life as it affects patients with cancer. These meetings, the proceedings of which have been published regularly as a special issue of the *Journal ONCOLOGY*, have been extraordinarily successful and have contributed to an increased awareness of the need to improve the quality of cancer patients' lives throughout the world.

These events have been sponsored by St. Mary Medical Center in Long Beach, California and have provided Continuing Medical Education credits to physicians and health care professionals.

The first symposium was published in May of 1990 and focused on the definition and measurement of quality of life in oncology; subsequently it was published also as a hard cover book. Dr. Simon Tchekmedyan and Dr. David Cella co-chaired, organized, and edited this event and publication. Drs. Tchekmedyan and Cella have since co-chaired every subsequent Quality of Life Symposium. The second symposium was published in February of 1992, and focused on care of the older cancer patient. The third symposium was devoted to the role of nutrition regarding new

strategies for cancer prevention and therapy; it was published in November of 1993. The fourth symposium proceedings were published in November of 1995 and presented economic and quality of life outcomes in oncology.

The fifth symposium was published in September of 2002 and was dedicated to the management of anemia in patients with cancer. This publication included 18 articles on the subject of anemia in patients with cancer as well as 17 quality of life measurement scales. The symposium was chaired and the proceedings organized and edited by Dr. Simon Tchekmedyan, Medical Director, Pacific Shores Medical Group, Director of Cancer Services, St. Mary Medical Center in Long Beach, California, and Clinical Professor of Medicine at UCLA; Dr. David Cella, Director of the Center on Outcomes Research and Education, Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois; and Dr. John Glaspy, Professor of Medicine, Division of Hematology/Oncology in the Department of Medicine at UCLA.

These publications are referred to by physicians in practice and researchers around the world regularly, and we are very grateful to the many individuals, including doctors, nurses, allied health professionals, patients, and volunteers who contributed their time, thoughts, and many efforts to them.

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