

# The Advanced Practitioner's Role in Treating Patients With Hematologic Malignancies: Highlights From SOHO 2021

ALEXIS C. GEPPNER, MLS, CTTS, MPAS, PA-C, *Guest Editor*

Welcome to highlights from the ninth annual meeting of the Society of Hematologic Oncology (SOHO), presented virtually September 8 to September 11, 2021. This supplement to JADPRO provides an overview of selected lectures from the SOHO conference with the aim of educating advanced practitioners on cutting-edge advances, clinical applications, and novel biological and therapeutic approaches for patients with hematologic malignancies. Our objective is to promote research, education, prevention, and optimal patient care. In this edition, we highlight notable presentations from the SOHO conference in leukemia, lymphoma, myeloma, and related hematologic malignancies.

First, we focus on the developmental timeline of treating acute lymphoblastic leukemia, the addition of CD19 and CD20 antibodies, and the improvement in survival with the addition of updated tyrosine kinase inhibitors to the regimen of Philadelphia chromosome–positive acute lym-

phoblastic leukemia (Ph+ ALL). Unlike pediatric ALL, which is said to be curable in > 90% of cases, adult ALL has a historically dismal prognosis with limited treatment options. There have been major advances in the treatment of adult ALL with improved outcomes and superior prognostic models that have guided treatment decisions. We also spotlight myelodysplastic syndromes (MDS) and acute myeloid leukemia (AML), placing emphasis on both p53 and *IDH* mutations. While hypomethylating agent (HMA)-based therapy remains the standard of care, we discuss the lack of durable responses and shift the focus to targeted therapy.

Second, we highlight therapeutic approaches to myelofibrosis, treatment of Richter syndrome/transformation of chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL), and CAR T-cell therapy in the treatment of B-cell maturation antigen (BCMA) multiple myeloma (MM). While Janus kinase (JAK) inhibition remains the cornerstone of the treatment of myelofibrosis, there are unmet needs for patients with suboptimal responses. Despite advances in the treatment of CLL, patients with Richter syndrome still carry a poor prognosis. Research on

the role of molecular mutations and the need for novel agents is essential.

Finally, we stress the importance of immunotherapy in the treatment of T-cell lymphoma, novel agents in the treatment of aggressive B-cell lymphoma, and new treatment approaches in relapsed and refractory mantle cell lymphoma. Emphasis is placed on bispecific antibodies, PD-1 blockade, and CAR T-cell therapy, as well as an understanding of toxicities and impeding relapse. Awareness of clinical trial opportunities for patients is of utmost importance in a population with minimal viable treatment options.

Two expert colleagues and I provided video highlights from the SOHO meeting, gave our personal perspective, and discussed how these topics affect the management of patients. We encourage

you to review the videos at [advancedpractitioner.com/highlights](https://advancedpractitioner.com/highlights).

Hematologic malignancies and their treatment are ever-changing, and advanced practitioners play a critical role in the prevention and early recognition of adverse events and relapse. While understanding the disease process, it is imperative that we continue to stay up to date on ongoing research strategies with the attempt to minimize cytotoxic chemotherapy, adverse events, and time in the hospital. We hope this supplement provides education, updated treatment practices, and practical strategies that you can apply to your own practice. Thank you for your dedication to our patients and continuing to promote optimal patient care through knowledge, understanding, and compassion. ●