

Winning over the two Cs - COVID-19 and Cancer

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Mumbai,

Esperer Onco Nutrition evidence based Responsible Nutrition (E2RN) hosted a virtual symposium on **Vaccinations for cancer patients: What to know before the Corona vaccination** on Tuesday, 12th January 2021, 7:00 PM, India.

The host of this virtual discussion was Mr **Raktim Chattopadhyay, Founder & CEO of Esperer Onco Nutrition** with 10 speakers from the UK, USA, and India. Over 100 participants attended the symposium; the webinar was addressed to cancer patients and their family members along with relevant clinicians. The symposium offered a presentation of important topics such as, first-hand experience of tackling UK variant strain, COVID-19 vaccine and Cancer and India v/s USA & UK experience - difference and similarities.

Dr. Vivek Shrivastav, Vice President Research & Development and Operations at Esperer Onco Nutrition said, “Not so incredibly, there’s a lot of confusion among cancer patients — as well as their oncologists and caregivers — as to whether the vaccine is a good idea or a bad idea for somebody dealing with cancer. Patients with cancer are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 because of the immunocompromising nature of cancer treatments. On top of that, progressing cancer itself depletes the immune system and leaves patients susceptible to infection. Cancer patients should be early in the vaccination process. Fundamentally, we should try to stop community transmission, and to focus on groups at high-risk for transmission and complications first. We should prioritize high-risk groups, but we also need to do it in a way that’s even-handed. We’re fighting a pandemic where cancer patients are at four-five-times greater risk for fatality than others. It’s a risk-benefit equation. Their risk from COVID-19 is exceptionally high and cancer cases should have a definite regimen of vaccination, which may further consolidate by carrying out scientific research, applied research and clinical studies.”

In general, vaccines are not recommended during chemotherapy or radiation therapy. Vaccines require a healthy immune system that can recognize and kill disease-causing germs. And it takes a healthy immune system at least 2 weeks from the time of vaccination to start recognizing and killing germs. That means vaccination timing is just as important as getting the vaccine itself.

Dr Purvish Parikh, Group Oncology Director Academic at Shelby Cancer and Research Institutes, Mumbai, said “We recommend that all cancer patients get vaccinated against COVID-19. This is in line with recommendations by important international Oncology societies. Vaccination should be taken even by those patients who have been previously exposures to the virus or have antibody titres. Timing of the vaccination need to take into consideration patient specific factors - like being on active chemotherapy, performances status, severity of uncontrolled comorbidity, and pregnant or lactating mothers.”

Esperer Nutrition is superintended to understand and brainstorm the cancer related topics through its E2RN programme and recently on January 12th various attributes on COVID 19 vaccine and cancer were debated.

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