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The nominator of this paper commented: “The paper by Rosenberg et al has two messages of utmost importance: one general biological, even humanistic, and one methodological. The general biological lesson is that the overwhelming source of human genetic variation is between individuals and not between ethnic groups. In the paper this becomes even clearer by the finding that there are no absolute genetic differences between ethnic groups: the differences that exist are in relative frequencies only.

“The methodological lesson is that for genetic risk assessment it follows that investigators can use standard epidemiological study designs, provided self-reported ethnic background is taken into account; for such risk assessment one should not worry about ‘genetic admixture.’

“This is the most enlightening aspect of the paper, however, is the insight that it gives in the ‘genetic structure of human populations’—the very title of the paper.”

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Treatment of infection in nonneutropenic patients, with treatment directed toward the most likely pathogens. For patients with significant neutropenia, a course of broad spectrum prophylactic antimicrobials should be initiated. The researchers recommend treatment of infection in nonneutropenic patients, with treatment directed toward the most likely pathogens. For patients with significant neutropenia, a course of broad spectrum prophylactic antimicrobials should be initiated. The researchers recommend antibiotic coverage; an antiviral agent, typically acyclovir or one of its congeners, if the patient tests positive for herpes simplex virus; and an antifungal agent.

A good choice for the latter is fluconazole, which, at a dose of 400 mg daily, lowers the risk of fungal infections and mortality in patients undergoing allogeneic bone marrow transplant.

Dr. Waselenko said the antimicrobials should be continued until the patient develops a neutropenic fever or experiences neutrophil recovery.

Contrary to common belief, iodine prophylaxis is not indicated, she said. The reason: Owing to their short half-lives, radionuclides are unlikely to be components of a “dirty bomb.”

**Stem Cell Therapy**

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**Stem Cell Therapy**

While it might seem a given that stem cells available, she said, the treatment should be used to treat patients with severe bone marrow injury due to accidental or intentional radiation overdose, its role is actually quite limited, Dr. Waselenko said.

“Most patients have combined injuries and would not be good candidates,” she said. “If you have significant lung or liver injury, it’s no good either.”

Finally, patients with less than 8 Gy exposure can probably survive with transplantation, while doses of more than 10 Gy are likely to be fatal in any case.

But for the subset of patients exposed to 8 to 10 Gy, who do not have other injuries, and who do have autologous or syngeneic hematopoietic stem cells available, she said, the treatment may be lifesaving.

**The Big “C”**

We love almost every minute of our work with one of the most dreaded problems known to man. We get to see most people get better or we help them say the best goodbye they can.

We know that we too could have or have had the big “C” so we put ourselves in their shoes. We give them the care we would want recognizing the blessings in life we all could lose.

We balance our stress with a life outside work. We understand emotions and each individual’s worth.

We’re better people as are those who come our way because of the big “C” and the lessons we are sharing.

Cancer is not the only big “C,” our big “C” is Caring. 

**Chromosomal aberrations have become the gold standard for biodosimetry.**

This poem was written by Barb Henry, ARNP, MSN, Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner for Oncology Hematology Care & The Jewish Hospital Blood & Marrow Transplant Program in Cincinnati. Her picture was taken at a local annual cancer survivors’ reunion. She has worked in oncology for four years, and notes that she wrote this poem spontaneously after reading OT and reflecting on her clinical practice.

**Radiation Terrorism**

*continued from page 39*

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**‘Paper of the Year’ Announced by Lancet**

Further information about “The Hematologist and Radiation Casualties” is available at www.ashepducationbook.org; pp. 473-496.

**POETRY BY CANCER CAREGIVERS**

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