CLL Society’s Official Statement on Boosters for CLL (Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia) Patients

August 20, 2021

To Whom It May Concern

The FDA expanded the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) on August 12, 2021 to allow COVID-19 booster shots for the immunocompromised. All CLL patients, regardless of their current treatment status, have significant immune suppression and have well documented impaired immune responses to most vaccines (including those for COVID-19) and are therefore eligible for the booster.

Accordingly, the CLL Society joins the CDC and other CLL specialists in encouraging those that have chronic lymphocytic leukemia who received the Pfizer or Moderna mRNA vaccines for prevention of COVID-19 to move forward with a booster as soon as possible, unless otherwise advised by their healthcare team.

This is based on three factors:
1) Possible impaired response to initial vaccination dosing
2) Waning protection over time
3) Increased transmissibility with the Delta variant

Please administer the booster shot to the CLL patient upon their request according to the guidelines mentioned above.

Sincerely,

Brian Koffman, MDCM (retired), MS Ed
Co-Founder, Executive VP and Chief Medical Officer, CLL Society

Alan Z. Skarbnik, MD
Medical Advisory Board Member, CLL Society
Novant Health Cancer Institute
Weisiger Cancer Institute

S. Shahzad Mustafa, MD
Expert Medical Council Member, CLL Society
Rochester Regional Health
Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine, University of Rochester

References:
3. Parry, Helen Marie, and McIroy, Graham and Bruton, Rachel and Ali, Myah and Stephens, Christine and Damery, S. and Otter, Ashley and McSkeane, Tina and Rolfe, Hayley and Faustini, Sian and Wall, Nadzehra and Hillmen, P. and Pratt, Guy and Paneesha, Shankara and Zuo, Jianmin and Richter, Alex G. and Moss, Paul, Antibody Responses After First and Second COVID-19 Vaccination in Patients with Chronic Lymphocytic Leukaemia.