

**CLL SOCIETY**

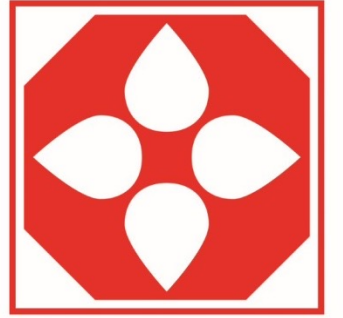
*Smart Patients Get Smart Care™*

# Treatment for CLL: When is the Right Time to Start?

June 3, 2024

9:00 AM PT, 10:00 AM MT  
11:00 AM CT, 12:00 PM ET

This Program Was Made Possible  
Through Generous Donors Like You  
and Grant Support From



CLL SOCIETY



# Speakers



## **Speaker**

**Laura J. Zitella, MS, RN, ACNP-BC, AOCN**

Hematology, Blood & Marrow Transplant, and Cellular Therapies Program

UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center

Associate Clinical Professor, School of Nursing

University of California San Francisco



## **Moderator**

**Stephen Feldman**

CLL Patient Advocate

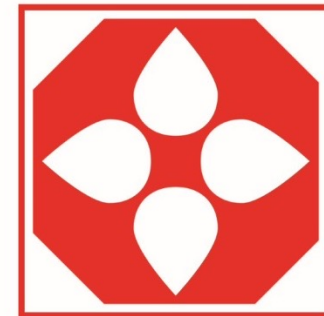


## **Welcome**

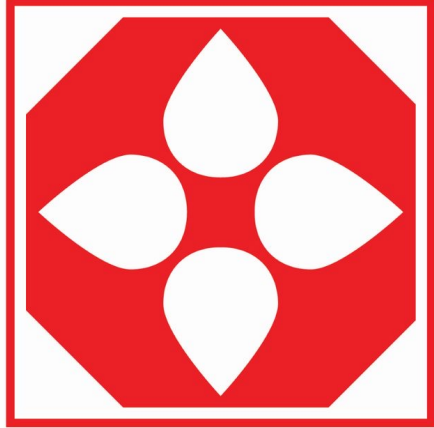
**Robyn Brumble, MSN, RN**

Director of Scientific Affairs and Research

CLL Society



CLL SOCIETY



**CLL SOCIETY**

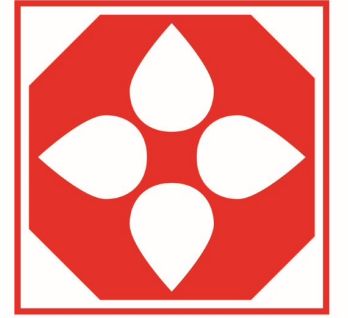
*Smart Patients Get Smart Care™*

# Treatment For CLL: When Is The Right Time To Start?

Laura Zitella, NP  
Nurse Practitioner

University of California San Francisco  
June 3, 2024

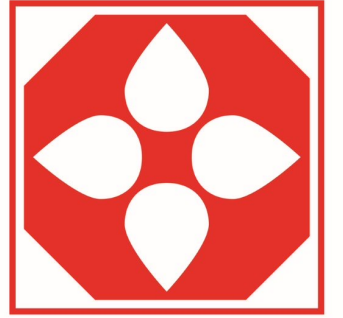
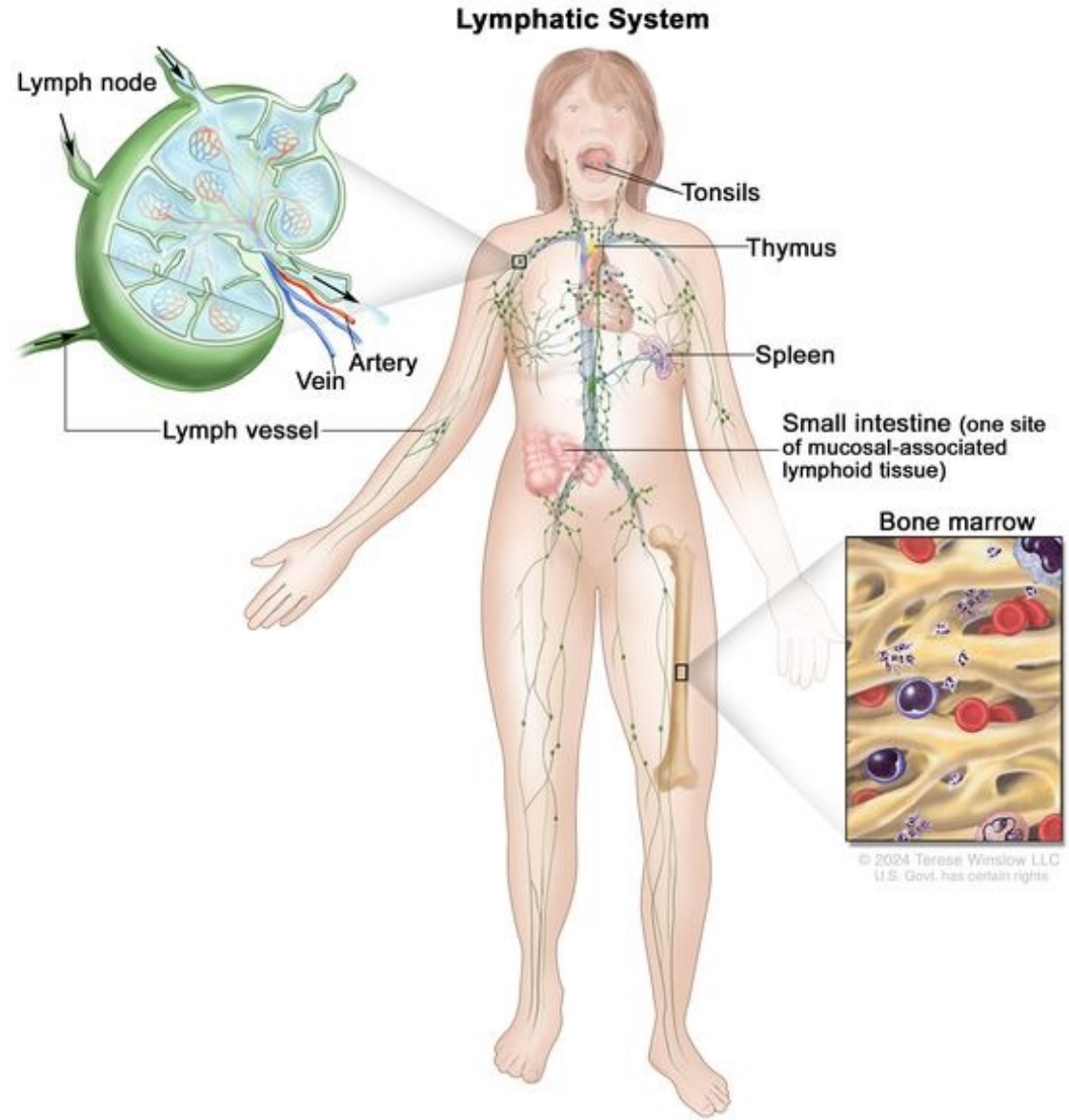
# What is CLL/SLL?



CLL SOCIETY

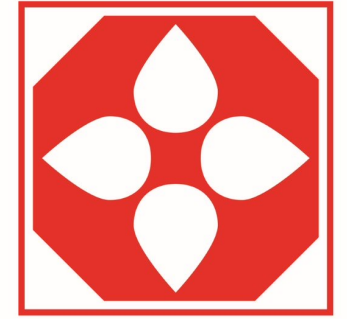
- Most common adult leukemia
- Cancer of B-cell lymphocytes which results in ongoing growth and accumulation of abnormal B-lymphocytes
- Primary sites of involvement:
  - Peripheral blood
  - Spleen
  - Lymph nodes
  - Bone marrow
- CLL and SLL are the same type of cancer
  - In CLL, most of the cancer cells are in the blood and bone marrow
  - In SLL, the cancer cells are mainly in the lymph nodes and spleen

# Where Are Lymph Nodes Located?

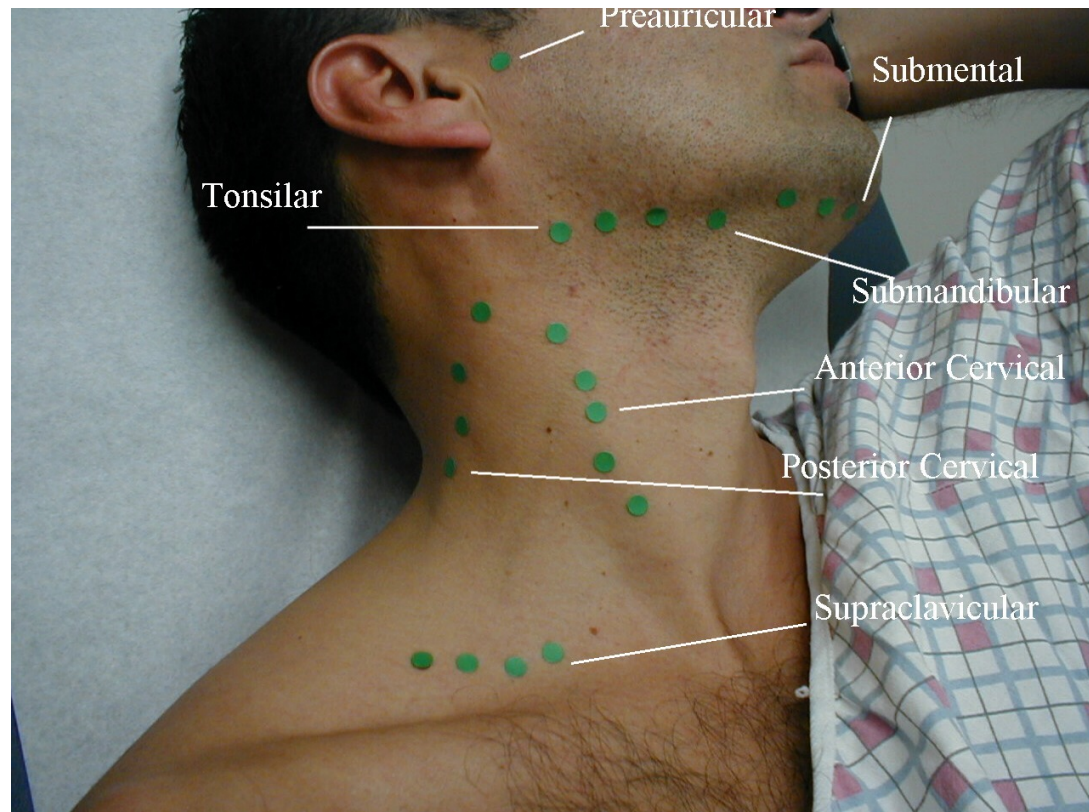


CLL SOCIETY

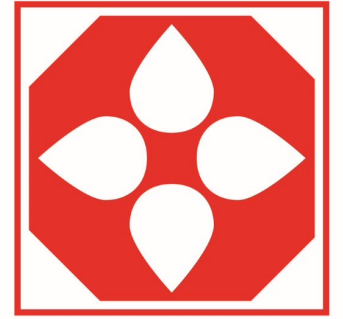
# What Do Swollen Lymph Nodes Look Like?



CLL SOCIETY



# How Was My CLL Or SLL Diagnosis Determined?



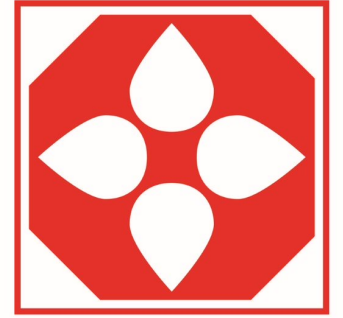
CLL SOCIETY

- Most people do not have any symptoms at the time of diagnosis
- Usually diagnosed when you have a complete blood count (CBC) and there is a high white blood cell count
- Diagnosis by peripheral blood (this is the most common):
  - Flow cytometry detects proteins on the cell surface and can identify a group of cells that have the same combination of proteins on the cell surface





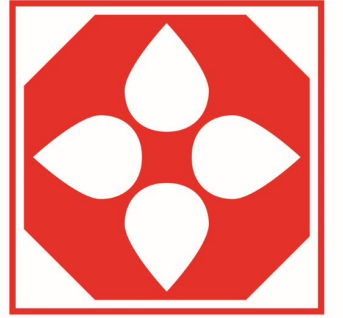
# Why Shouldn't My Cancer Be Treated Immediately?



CLL SOCIETY

- CLL is not like many other cancers because it usually grows very slowly
- Some people may never need treatment
- Most people will not need any treatment for months to years
- Starting treatment early doesn't lengthen life
- If there are no symptoms and you feel well, it is better to avoid taking a medication that may have side effects or be costly
- There may be better treatments in the future

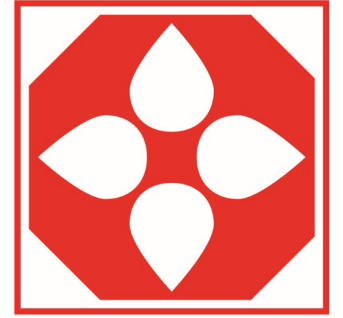
# What is Active Surveillance?



CLL SOCIETY

- Active surveillance
  - The period of time after diagnosis before treatment is needed
  - The period of time after treatment when no treatment is needed
- Routine visits with your healthcare provider
  - Physical exam
  - Review of symptoms
  - Lab tests

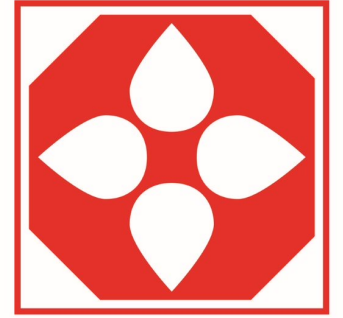
# Is There Anything I Can Do During Active Surveillance?



CLL SOCIETY

- Stay up-to-date on vaccinations
- Lifestyle adjustments:
  - Regular exercise
  - Whole food diet, minimize processed foods
  - Maintain emotional health
  - Avoid smoking
- Check vitamin D level and take vitamin D supplement if vitamin D level is low
  - Normal vitamin D levels may be associated with longer life
- Ask if there are any clinical trials available

# How Will My Healthcare Provider Determine When It's Time To Start Treatment?

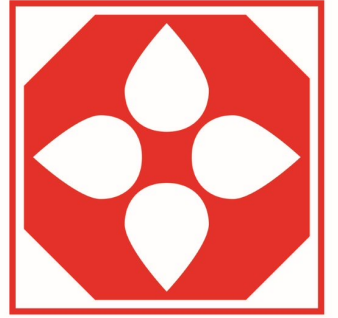


CLL SOCIETY

When you have symptoms that interfere with daily life such as:

- Constitutional symptoms:
  - Severe fatigue
  - Drenching night sweats
  - Unintended weight loss of at least 10% of body weight over 6 months
  - Fevers without an infection
- Physical examination findings such as enlarged liver, spleen, or lymph nodes
- Laboratory findings
  - Rapidly rising absolute lymphocyte count (ALC) or low red blood cell or platelet counts.
- Repeated or prolonged infections
- Autoimmune cytopenias (low blood counts) that do not respond well to steroids or other treatment

# Shared Decision-Making

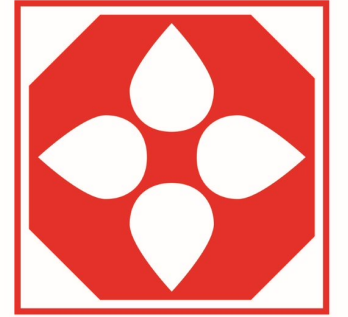
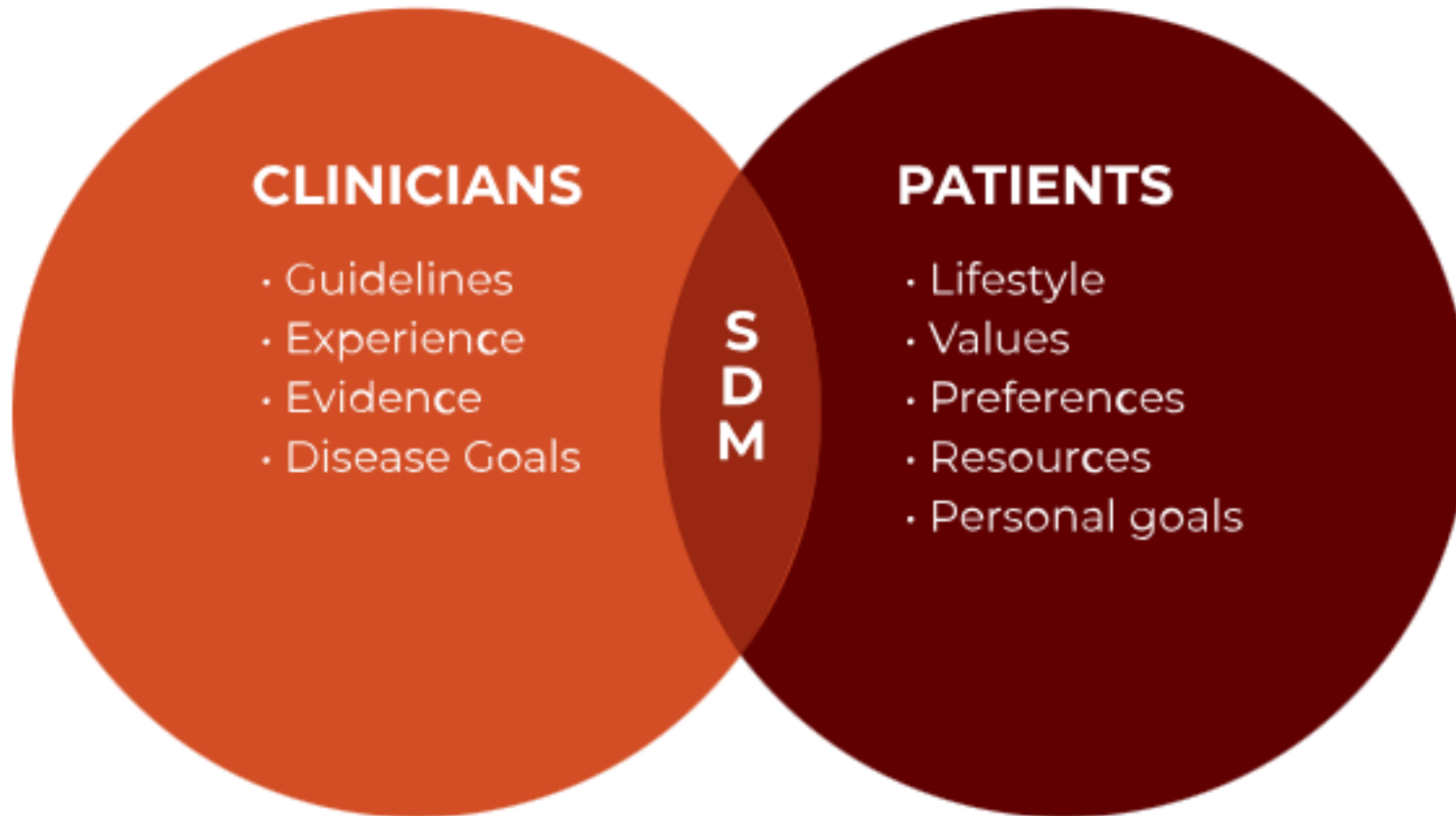


CLL SOCIETY

- A partnership with your healthcare provider where they help you understand all of the available treatment options, and the likely benefits and harms of each, you help your healthcare provider understand your preferences and what matters most to you, and together you and your healthcare provider select the best course of action for you
- For example, if you are experiencing fatigue, you can explain to your healthcare provider how the fatigue is affecting your life and day-to-day activities. You and your healthcare provider will work together to try to determine if the fatigue is from the CLL or some other cause such as low thyroid levels or other medical conditions. AIHA can lead to fatigue, and treating AIHA can alleviate symptoms without beginning treatment for CLL or SLL

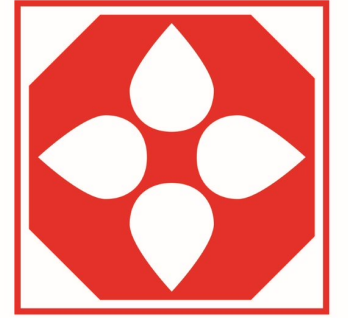
# Shared Decision-Making

## Combining Perspectives



CLL SOCIETY

# Shared Decision-Making

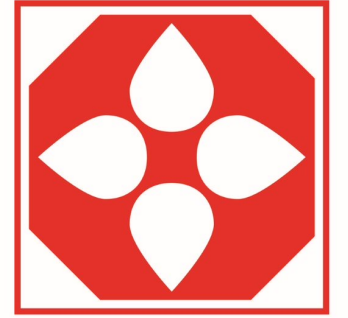


CLL SOCIETY

- The two most common treatments for first-line therapy are:
  - BTK inhibitors which are pills taken indefinitely
  - Venetoclax and obinutuzumab which is a year-long treatment
- Discussions about treatment options should include:
  - Expected response to the treatment
  - Potential side effects
  - Logistics
    - Living close to an infusion center
    - Convenience
    - Cost



# Can Anything Be Done To Improve My Symptoms?

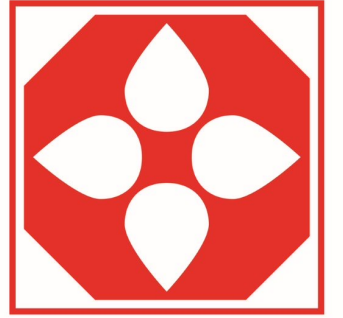


CLL SOCIETY

- Consider keeping a symptom journal
- Notify your healthcare provider for:
  - Enlarging lymph nodes
  - Worsening fatigue that disrupts your daily activities
  - Shortness of breath
  - Decreased appetite or feeling full easily
  - Pain
  - Persistent fevers even though you don't have an infection
  - Frequent infections
  - Drenching night sweats



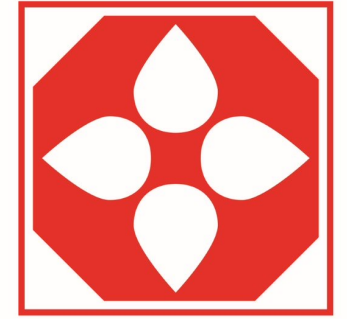
# What Is Cancer-Related Fatigue?



CLL SOCIETY

- Physical and/or emotional exhaustion related to CLL or its treatment
- Not the type of tiredness that improves with rest or sleep; it is a lack of energy that doesn't improve with rest or sleep and limits usual activities

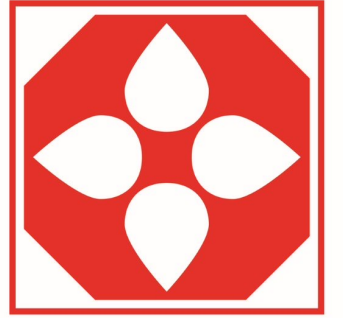
# How Do I Manage Cancer-Related Fatigue?



CLL SOCIETY



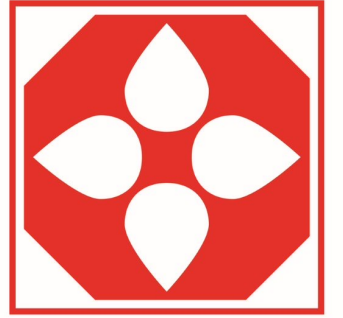
# Sleep Hygiene



CLL SOCIETY

- Go to bed and wake up at the same time each day even on weekends and holidays
- Avoid naps after 3 pm
- Take a warm shower or bath about 90 minutes before bed. A hot bath will raise your body temperature, and it is the drop in body temperature that may leave you feeling sleepy.
- Keep your bedroom cool, dark, and gadget/TV-free
- Limit caffeine after 12 pm
- Avoid exercise within 6 hours of bedtime
- Establish relaxation routine

# Relaxation Techniques

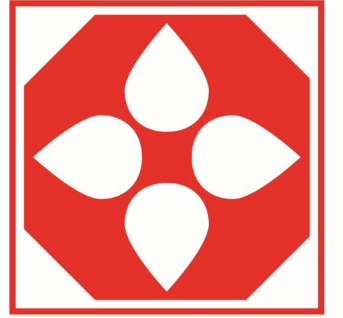


CLL SOCIETY

- Breathing
  - Belly breathing: long, slow, deep breaths
  - 4-7-8 breathing: inhale for 4 seconds, hold your breath for 7 seconds, and exhale for 8 seconds
- Body scan: focus on one part of the body or group of muscles at a time and mentally release any physical tension you feel there
- Guided imagery: think about soothing scenes, places, or experiences to help you relax and focus
- Mindfulness meditation: focus on what you are feeling in the moment and, when your thoughts drift, bring your mind back to focus on the present moment
- Yoga, tai chi, and qigong

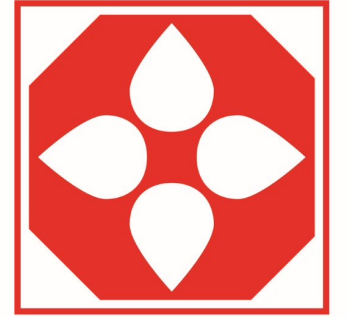
# Painful Lymph Nodes

- Warm compress
- Rest
- Acetaminophen, after discussion with your healthcare provider



CLL SOCIETY

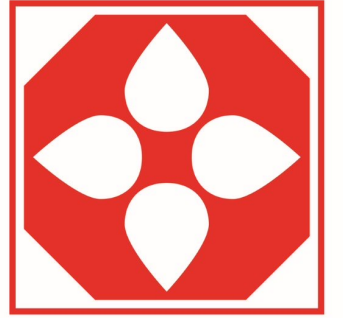
# Weight Loss Related To Lack Of Appetite



CLL SOCIETY

- Eat small, frequent meals
- Eat foods high in protein and healthy fats
  - Nuts, seeds, trail mix, nut butters ( peanut butter, almond butter etc)
  - Full fat Greek yogurt or full-fat cottage cheese
  - Beans, bean dips, and hummus
  - Avocado, guacamole
  - Oats or granola
  - Eggs
  - Fatty fish: salmon, mackerel, sardines, anchovies and bluefin tuna

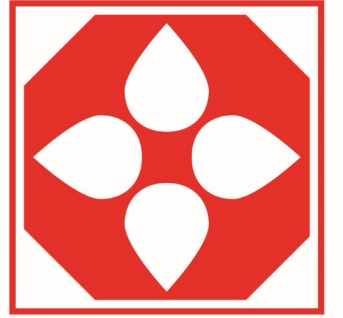
# Night Sweats



CLL SOCIETY

- Maintain a cool sleep environment using lightweight, breathable bedding and sleepwear, fans, and a cool, well-ventilated room
- Take a shower before bed
- Consider a cool gel pillow
- Practice relaxation techniques to promote calmness and reduce stress
- Avoid stimulating activities or screen time close to bedtime
- Stay well hydrated throughout the day and strive to maintain a healthy weight

# Summary

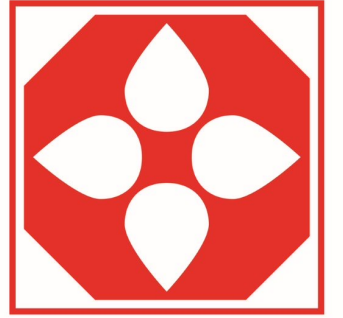


CLL SOCIETY

- CLL is not like many other cancers because it usually grows very slowly
- Some people may never need treatment and most people will not need treatment for months to years
- Your healthcare provider is a partner in your care and, together, you will decide when to start treatment and which treatment is best for you
- People with CLL are at increased risk of infection. Protect yourself by staying up-to-date on immunizations

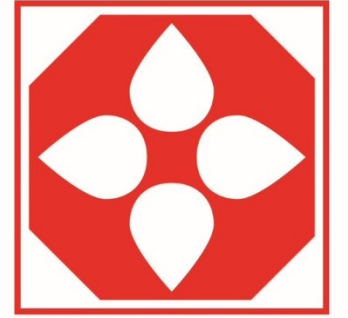


# Links To Additional CLL Society Content



CLL SOCIETY

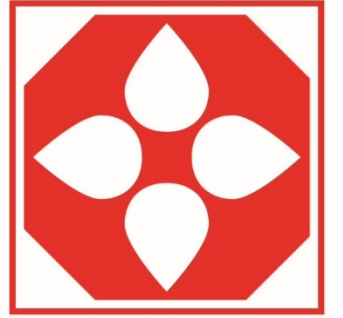
- <https://cllsociety.org/recognizing-when-it-is-time-to-treat/>
- <https://cllsociety.org/2023/04/decision-making-about-treatment-of-cll-sll/>
- <https://cllsociety.org/cancer-related-fatigue-handout/>
- <https://cllsociety.org/managing-symptoms/>
- <https://cllsociety.org/active-surveillance/>



CLL SOCIETY

# Audience Questions & Answers

This Program Was Made Possible  
Through Generous Donors Like You  
and Grant Support From

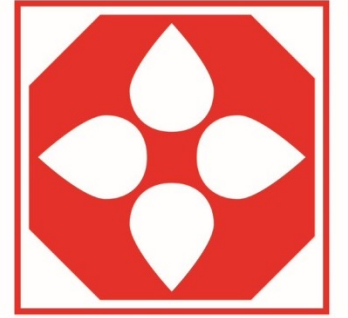


CLL SOCIETY



# Thank You for Attending!

Please take a moment to complete our **post-event survey**, your feedback is important to us



CLL SOCIETY

If your question was not answered, please feel free to email [asktheexpert@cllsociety.org](mailto:asktheexpert@cllsociety.org)

Join us for our next virtual event, **Ask Me Anything:**  
**Featuring Dr. Richard Furman and Jeff Folloder** on  
July 24<sup>th</sup>

CLL Society is invested in your long life. Please invest in the long life of the CLL Society by supporting our work

**[cllsociety.org/donate-to-cll-society/](https://cllsociety.org/donate-to-cll-society/)**