

How Your Gift to Miles for Myeloma is Used

Contributions to Miles for Myeloma are used to support research conducted by Rafat Abonour, MD, and his Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Cancer Center colleagues. As a team, they are committed to investigating new therapies for **plasma cell disorders including multiple myeloma, Waldenstrom's macroglobulinemia and primary amyloidosis**. We want patients to have **access to new and better therapies through clinical trials**. Many of our trials are “first in human” trials, **meaning that they are not yet available anywhere else in the world**.

Here are some examples of our current work:

- IU Simon Cancer Center researchers have developed parthenolide – extracted from the feverfew plant – into a **new treatment for cancer**. Our team is **designing a clinical trial for myeloma patients** to determine if this compound will stop the over-expression of a protein that blocks chemotherapy from killing myeloma cells.
- **We are leading a national study** testing a new combination of chemotherapy and monoclonal antibodies in patients with **Waldenstrom's macroglobulinemia**.
- We don't understand why some patients respond well to certain drugs and others do not. Our goal is to **identify the specific differences in each individual patient's genes so we can develop highly tailored therapies** to address each individual's cancer.
- We are studying ways to **make stem cell transplants available to patients even when no “perfectly matched” donor exists**. We are debunking the long-held belief that donor and recipient tissues must be closely matched in order to conduct safe and effective transplants.
- Because so many stem cell transplant patients eventually relapse, we are working to **develop new chemotherapy regimens that increase the long-term success rate of transplants** when the patient's own stem cells are used.
- A patient's own immune system can be a powerful tool in fighting cancer. Unfortunately, when cancer invades a person's body, the immune system will often begin to tolerate the cancer and fail to recognize cancer cells as “the enemy.” We are studying ways to **break this tolerance by using drugs or specialized cells** to modulate the immune system.
- We are actively engaged in building a large patient tissue bank at the IU Simon Cancer Center. Such banks are important because they allow us to **conduct laboratory tests on biological, immunological and drug therapies** before testing them in patients.

Each year, our team cares for **more than 500 myeloma patients and accepts more than 100 new referrals**. Our IU Simon Cancer Center stem cell transplantation program has been recognized as a National Center of Excellence.

Thank you for helping fund a better future for patients with myeloma and Other plasma cell disorders!



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