

Transcript Details

This is a transcript of an educational program. Details about the program and additional media formats for the program are accessible by visiting: <https://reachmd.com/programs/closing-gaps-nsclc/the-importance-of-symptom-management-for-nsclc-patients/11355/>

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The Importance of Symptom Management for NSCLC Patients

Announcer:

You're listening to *Closing the Gaps in Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer* on ReachMD, sponsored by Lilly. On today's program, Dr. Deepa Rangachari, practicing oncologist at Harvard's Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, discusses the importance of symptom management for patients with non-small cell lung cancer. Let's hear from Dr. Rangachari now.

Dr. Rangachari:

I think for all of our patients, common unmet needs relate very much to optimal symptom management. Our goal with our evolving therapeutic strategies wherever and whenever possible is to try and convert what is otherwise a life-shortening illness into something that someone might be able to live with and live well with on a more chronic basis. I think what that means then for our patients is that their time on treatment with better control of their disease is longer, but that also means potentially that they are living longer but with certain daily burden of symptoms that we need to be more proactive about managing and attentive to.

Symptoms like fatigue, decreased appetite, shortness of breath, these are very commonplace symptoms in many, if not all, of our patients. Some of the interventions for those things involve pharmacologic interventions, but some of them, frankly, don't. They may involve alterations in daily dietary and sleeping habits. They may involve alterations in physical activity. They may involve use of things like a handheld fan for relief of refractory shortness of breath. I think those are some things that we encounter and talk about very commonly with patients.

There have been some studies, including a practice-changing study in lung cancer patients, showing the importance of early engagement with palliative care and symptom management professionals, and I think sort of in the same breath with which we talk about unmet needs as they relate to therapeutic advances, it's important to acknowledge unmet needs in terms of underutilization of expert management of symptoms and biopsychosocial coping issues as they relate to living with lung cancer.

Announcer:

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