

Delaware SGNA Newsletter



January 2009

The President's Note

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As incoming president, I hope to assist in continuing to provide quality educational opportunities for all members and GI nurses and associates in the community.

The Delaware SGNA Region 10 has evolved in many new and exciting ways over the last two years under the leadership of Melinda Huffman. As noted in previous news letters, Delaware has not only presented the Delmarva area with wonderful educational opportunities through multi -regional and regional conferences, but has also developed a web site from which information can be shared. Delaware has also had a voice at the national level by having representation at the house of delegates; having speaker representation and taking home first and second place for poster presentations. Our membership has grown and our ability to reach more members has been accomplished through video conferencing our meetings.

As incoming president, I hope to assist in continuing to provide quality educational opportunities for all members and GI nurses and associates in the community. I plan to continue to provide representation at SGNA national conventions, and hope that we can enter more poster presentation competitions at nationals. Region of the Year would be a wonderful feather in our cap and we will continue to strive to accomplish this goal. Increasing membership as well as assisting and supporting CGRN certification is an ongoing goal.

Check out our calendar for many wonderful upcoming events. Hope to see you at the multi- regional conference March 27th through the 29th at the Sheraton Inn in Dover and at the Fall conference yet to be planned. The National Conference will be held May 15th through the 20th in St. Louis, Missouri.

I know that there are many talented GI nurses and associates that have so much to offer to our region and would love to hear from you. Please contact me at jdsk@verizon.net to share ideas and stories from your experiences in various GI settings, or to offer suggestions on how we can assist you in your professional endeavors. Happy New Year and I am looking forward to working with you in 2009!

Kathryn Stranahan BSN, RN, CGRN
President Delaware SGNA Region 10

Humira

By: Etta Banke, LPN
Delaware SGNA Member

ADVANCES IN MEDICINE-HUMIRA

Humira (adalimumab) is a medication used to treat patients with moderate to severe rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis, and adults with moderate to severe Crohn's disease with poor response to other treatments.

Patients with these illnesses have too much TNF (tumor necrosis factor), a protein made by the body's immune system. Humira can reduce TNF and suppress its damaging effects. However, it can also decrease the immune system response to fight infection. As GI nurses, we will focus on the treatment of patients with Crohn's disease.

CONSIDERATIONS PRIOR TO THERAPY

Before beginning treatment, patients should make their physicians aware if they have or are being treated for an infection, have open wounds or a history of recurrent infections, have or had Hepatitis-B, TB or had close contact with someone infected with TB.

Clients should be tested for TB prior to the initiation of therapy. If found to have TB, they should finish their full course of treatment for TB prior to starting Humira.

Caution should be exercised in individuals identified as HBV carriers. HBV reactivation has been reported in patients receiving TNF blockers including Humira, and some cases have been fatal. Routine baseline labs should be obtained prior to initiation of treatment as well as thyroid function studies and Hepatitis serology.

TREATMENT

Initiation of treatment should be performed under the supervision of a qualified health care professional. Risks and benefits of treatment should be reviewed with the patient, and the patient should be instructed to read the entire package insert that comes with their medication. In training the patient and/or caregiver, it is necessary to assess their level of understanding and ability to properly administer the injections.

Humira is available in single dose pens and prefilled single dose syringes. Both provide 40 mg (0.8 ml) of Humira.

Recommended adult dose for patients with Crohn's disease is 160 mg initially on day one. (The medication can be given as 4 injections in one day or 2 injections per day over 2 consecutive days.) Day 15 the patient receives 80 mg, and beginning on day 29 they will inject 40 mg, and 40 mg every other week thereafter. (There have been no clinical studies on Crohn's patients requiring therapy beyond one year.) Crohn's patients may experience a reduction of symptoms or remission with Humira.

ADDITIONAL PATIENT TEACHING

Advise patients that during treatment they will need routine follow-up and monitoring of blood work to screen for hematologic reactions (e.g., thrombocytopenia and leukopenia).

Hypersensitivity reactions have been reported in approximately 1% of patients including anaphylaxis and allergic rash.

Instruct your patients that Humira lowers the immune system and the ability to fight infection. They need to seek immediate medical attention if they show any signs of infection, persistent fever, pallor, bleeding, bruising, TB, or reactivation of Hepatitis-B.

Other serious reactions in clinical trials were tremor, confusion, paresthesia, multiple sclerosis, subdural hematoma, lymphoma and malignancies while on Humira.

Individuals with latex sensitivity should be aware that the cap of the prefilled syringe contains latex. Instruct patients that they should not receive any live vaccines while on treatment.

Humira should be stored in the refrigerator in its original container until use at a temperature of 36-46 degrees F (2-8 degrees C). The medication should be protected from light and not frozen. If the medication is frozen, it should not be used. Patients when traveling should store their medication in a cool container with an ice pack. Clients and caregivers should be taught proper needle/syringe disposal, and that these items should not be reused.

End Note

By: Melinda A. Huffman, MSN, RN, CGRN
Delaware SGNA Immediate Past-President

I am sure most of you felt like you had been sucked into a wind tunnel during my two-year presidential term. I cannot believe it is over already!!

What a Whirlwind!!!! I am sure most of you felt like you had been sucked into a wind tunnel during my two-year presidential term. I cannot believe it is over already!! In retrospect the DELAWARE SGNA accomplished a lot and got some much deserved National Recognition. Now...we must ALL continue to support and work for better education of area GI Nurses and Associates, keep a strong National presence. As a member of the SGNA National education Committee I am encouraging Delaware SGNA Members' to volunteer for a national committee of interest. This will not only bring about personal and professional fulfillment, but it will help support the National SGNA in their endeavors to educate and support ALL Gastroenterology Nurses and Associates throughout the United States.

I also encourage members to write for the newsletter. This will broaden your knowledge base and give a point(s) for the Delaware SGNA Point System. Throughout the year keep pictures of your efforts to spread promote the SGNA, these will be great additions to our website! Start working now on your **GI Nurses and Associates Day. March 25, 2009.** presentations!

I am very honored to have served the Delaware SGNA as President and want to thank the members for ALL the experiences that I will never forget. If you want a challenge...GET INVOLVED!



Future Events-Save the Dates

March 2009-National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month!!

Spread the word... this is a preventable! Treatable! Beatable! Disease.

March 27-29- Delmarva Multi-Regional 11th Annual Education Conference. "Bridging the Chesapeake With New GI Trends"- Dover Shearaton, Dover, Delaware. See brochure online at delawaresgna.com.

April 13, 2009- Delaware SGNA Meeting-7pm-Nanticoke Memorial Hospital Cancer Care Center and Christiana Care Education Center- Room 14. Telephone conference also available.

May 15-20, 2009- SGNA's 36th Annual Course. **SGNA: Your Gateway to Opportunity. St. Louis, Missouri.** [Click here for 2010 Annual Course Information](#)

June 8th, 2009- Delaware SGNA Meeting-7pm-Nanticoke Memorial Hospital Cancer Care Center and Christiana Care Education Center- Room 14. Telephone conference also available.

September 14, 2009- Delaware SGNA Meeting-7pm-Nanticoke Memorial Hospital Cancer Care Center and Christiana Care Education Center- Room 14. Telephone conference also available.

November 7, 2009 Delaware SGNA Fall Education Day-Dover Sheraton Convention Center. 8am-5pm. Speakers to be announced.

November 9, 2009- Delaware SGNA Meeting-7pm-Nanticoke Memorial Hospital Cancer Care Center and Christiana Care Education Center- Room 14. Telephone conference also available.

