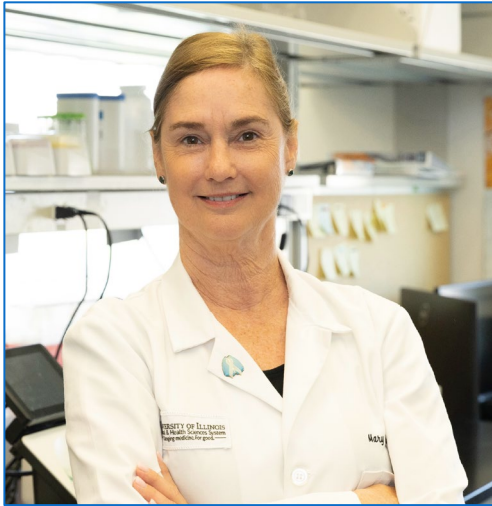




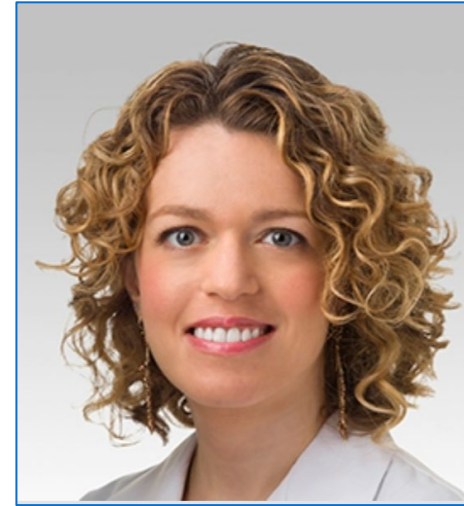
Managing Effects of Cancer and Treatment

Session Speakers



Mary Pasquinelli, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC

Director, Lung Screening Program
Lead Advanced Practice Nurse, Pulmonary and Medical Oncology
University of Illinois
Chicago, IL



Melanie Smith, MD

Assistant Professor of Medicine
Palliative Care Physician
Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine
Chicago, IL

Session Objectives

1. Recognize the day-to-day effects of living with *EGFR*-positive lung cancer and its treatments.
2. Provide practical strategies and support for managing symptoms and side effects, and when to contact the care team.

Please Send in Your Questions!

This QR code will be live throughout the session



Download the Slides Here
For Easier Viewing in PDF on Your Device





Practical, Patient-Centered Strategies in *EGFR+* Lung Cancer Care

The goal is not to “tough it out”

Side effects are easier to manage when they are reported *early*.

RECOGNIZE

Notice what is new or changing.

RESPOND

Use the plan your care team gave you.

REASSESS

Track whether it is improving.

REACH OUT

Call before symptoms become severe.

Your oncology care team wants to know what is happening between visits.

Cancer effects and treatment effects can overlap

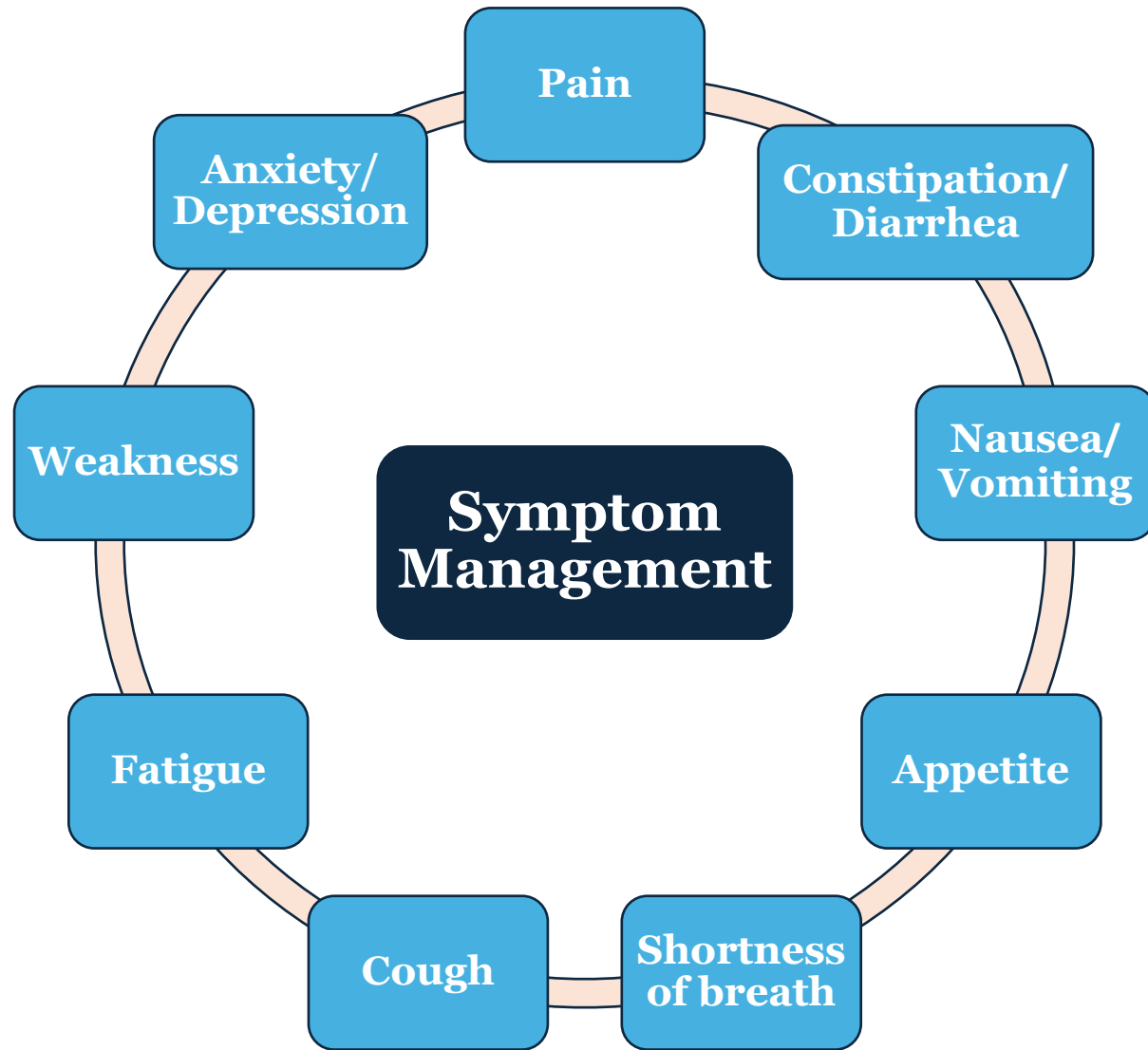
CANCER OR OTHER CAUSES

**Cough • breathlessness • pain •
fatigue • appetite change • anxiety**

TREATMENT

**Skin and nail changes • diarrhea •
mouth soreness • nausea • fatigue**

The safest question is not “Which one is it?”
It is *“Is this new, worsening, or affecting daily life?”*



Know your treatment - and its specific plan

ORAL EGFR TKI

Examples include osimertinib and other EGFR inhibitors.

Common themes: rash, dry skin, nail changes, diarrhea, mouth irritation, fatigue.

EGFR/MET ANTIBODY

IV or subcutaneous amivantamab-based treatment regimens (including combos) may add administration reactions and swelling to EGFR-related skin and nail effects (COCOON regimen)

COMBINATION THERAPY

Chemotherapy, radiation, surgery, and/or other drugs add their own effects and monitoring needs.

Do not start, stop, or change a cancer medicine without speaking with your oncology care team.

Protect the skin *before* problems start

DAILY

- ✓ Use a gentle, fragrance-free cleanser.
- ✓ Moisturize at least twice daily.
- ✓ Use broad-spectrum sunscreen and protective clothing.
- ✓ Avoid very hot showers, scrubs, and acne products unless advised.

CALL EARLY

Rash that is painful, spreading, crusting, blistering, draining - or affecting sleep and daily activities.

**EGFR rash is not typical acne.
Ask before using acne medication.**

Nail and fingertip care prevents small problems from growing

Protect

Wear gloves for wet work.
Use comfortable shoes.
Avoid cutting cuticles or artificial nails.

Inspect

Look for redness, swelling, drainage, cracks, or tenderness around nails.

Report

Call for increasing pain, pus, warmth, spreading redness, or fever.

Moisturize hands, feet, and nail folds often - but keep areas clean and dry if the skin is open.

Diarrhea: act on the first day

1 **COUNT** Track each loose stool and when it started.

2 **DRINK** Use fluids your care team recommends; replace electrolytes if advised.

3 **FOLLOW** Use the anti-diarrheal plan provided by your oncology team.

4 **CALL** Report persistent or worsening symptoms—especially with weakness or dizziness.

Urgent: inability to keep fluids down, fainting, confusion, blood in stool, or severe abdominal pain.

Mouth care supports eating, drinking, and comfort

Start with gentle care

- ✓ Use a soft toothbrush.
- ✓ Keep lips and mouth moist.
- ✓ Choose soft, cool foods when sore.
- ✓ Avoid tobacco, alcohol mouthwash, and irritating foods.

Call the care team

- Pain limits eating or drinking
- White patches or sores appear
- Swallowing becomes difficult
- Fever or dehydration develops

Ask before mixing a homemade mouth rinse; your team may have a preferred recipe.

Fatigue improves with pacing - not guilt

MOVE

Use short, regular activity as tolerated. Even a few minutes counts.

PACE

Alternate activity and rest. Protect energy for what matters most.

CHECK

Ask about anemia, sleep, pain, mood, nutrition, infection, and medication effects.

A sudden or major change in energy deserves a call - especially with shortness of breath, chest pain, dizziness, or fever.

Protect nutrition by treating symptoms early

Small, frequent meals often work better than three large meals.

NAUSEA

Use prescribed medication early; choose bland foods and small sips.

LOW APPETITE

Prioritize protein and calories; eat when appetite is best.

TASTE CHANGE

Try different temperatures, textures, seasonings, and utensils.

WEIGHT LOSS

Ask for an oncology dietitian before the loss becomes significant.

Pain and breathlessness deserve a plan

PAIN

Describe where it is, what it feels like, severity from 0–10, what triggers it, and what helps.

BREATHLESSNESS

Note whether it is new, at rest or with activity, sudden or gradual, and accompanied by cough, fever, chest pain, or swelling.

Call 911 for severe trouble breathing, blue/gray lips, fainting, confusion, or chest pressure.

Rare effects matter because early action matters

LUNGS

New/worsening cough, fever, or shortness of breath

HEART

Chest pain, fainting, racing/irregular heartbeat, sudden swelling

EYES

Eye pain, marked redness, light sensitivity, or vision change

SKIN

Blisters, peeling, widespread painful rash, or mouth/eye involvement

For severe symptoms: seek emergency care. For new or worsening symptoms: contact the oncology team promptly.

Use a simple traffic-light action plan



GREEN

Mild and manageable

Continue the care plan.
Track symptoms.
Mention at the next visit unless
the plan says otherwise.



YELLOW

New, persistent, or worsening

Contact the oncology team today.
Do not wait for the next
appointment.



RED

Severe or rapidly changing

Use the urgent number or
emergency care.
Call 911 for life-threatening
symptoms.

Your personal action plan—and the number to call—should come from your oncology care team.

Track the pattern, not just the symptom

Record once daily—or whenever something changes.

Photos help with skin and nail changes

SYMPTOM	
STARTED	
SEVERITY 0–10	
WHAT I TRIED	
DID IT HELP?	
IMPACT ON DAILY LIFE	

Bring your list of medicines, supplements, and over-the-counter products to every visit.

Before the visit, choose your three questions

01 **What symptoms should I call about the same day?**

02 **What can I safely use at home - and exactly how?**

03 **Who do I contact after hours or on weekends?**

Bring a support person, take notes, and ask the team to explain anything that is unclear.

Early reporting protects *quality of life*.

Notice changes. Use your plan. Track the response. Reach out early.

Your oncology care team is your partner in making treatment as safe and livable as possible.

Palliative Care

What is it really?

- Focuses on relief of **symptoms** and **stress** of serious illness
- Usually alongside cancer treatment
- Interdisciplinary team-based support
 - Nursing, social work, spiritual care

You are more than a diagnosis.

You are a *person* learning a new language.

Ask questions. Report symptoms. Accept support.

And keep making room for life.



Interactive Q&A