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/clinicians-roundtable/unanswered-questions-about-eosinophils-in-copd/85550/

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Unanswered Questions About Eosinophils in COPD

Announcer:
Welcome to *Clinician's Roundtable* on ReachMD. Today, Dr. MeiLan Han will share some of the questions about eosinophils in COPD that she's still trying to answer. Dr. Han is a Professor of Medicine and the Chief of the Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care at the University of Michigan Health. Let's hear from her now.

Dr. Han:
One thing is a little puzzling to me now that we understand the importance of eosinophils and also, for some patients, have quite a bit of long-term data on eosinophils for a given patient, given that it's often checked in primary care, and the electronic medical record faithfully captures, in some cases, years of data. I have seen a few patients who will go for a couple of years and have higher levels of eosinophils, and then suddenly, something happens, and they'll have lower levels, or vice versa. And I'll be honest—I do not fully understand why.

Does that mean something that's driving type 2 inflammation, maybe in their environment, changes, and therefore it's not a permanent phenotype? Is there something about the immune system, or maybe even another medication, that's altered the immune system? Who knows? The microbiome? There could be many things that potentially could alter someone's inherent immune system such that they display higher levels of type 2 inflammation over a certain period of time and then lower levels.

So for me, that is still an unanswered question. I think we still don't have perfect granularity related to that. If a patient has had a higher level in the past, how far back do we look and consider that? My gut, based on the data I've seen right now and my own clinical experience, is probably anywhere between one and two years back. I get a little nervous relying on data older than that, because there is that historic variability that I've seen.

And then I think perhaps the most interesting future question around this is that there are a lot of new drugs that are being tested for COPD that could actually have lower levels of eosinophils than what GOLD currently recommends. And so, looking ahead, it will be very interesting. There are several clinical trials that are testing new therapies with eosinophil thresholds at a 150 cells per microliter or more, which would potentially expand the patient population that might benefit from some of these newer biologics.

So it's very exciting to see the data from some of these clinical trials read out over the next few years, because it may change what thresholds we consider for identifying patients that might benefit from biologic therapies.

Announcer:
That was Dr. MeiLan Han sharing her open questions about eosinophils in COPD. To access this and other episodes in our series, visit *Clinician's Roundtable* on ReachMD.com, where you can Be Part of the Knowledge. Thanks for listening!

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