

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/heart-matters/supporting-attr-cm-patients-quality-of-life/49059/>

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Supporting Patients With ATTR-CM: Preserving Function and Quality of Life

Announcer:

This is *Heart Matters* on ReachMD. On this episode, Dr. Joban Vaishnav will discuss how we can support patients with newly diagnosed transthyretin amyloid cardiomyopathy, or ATTR-CM. Dr. Vaishnav is an Assistant Professor of Medicine and Director of the Comprehensive Amyloidosis Center at Johns Hopkins Medicine in Baltimore. Let's hear from her now.

Dr. Vaishnav:

When patients come to me, usually, the first clinic visit is very focused on diagnosis and a whole lot of things. As I get to know them, I do try to highlight what to expect long term, which is, at this state, they may get no better or slightly worse in terms of their symptom burden. But we really are trying to preserve their functional status and quality of life. This is a journey. I'm with them on this journey; I'll say that and just try to support them through that.

Patients with ATTR-CM often live most of their life being very healthy. Many of my patients were marathon runners and exercised vigorously, and then boom, they get hit with this diagnosis. The first thing I try to do is just acknowledge that this is a new diagnosis. It is a life-changing diagnosis, and one that they'll be living with indefinitely. I also try to celebrate the positive—the wins in terms of physical strength and physical activity.

I do try to empower my patients to build what is probably a modified but realistic routine. So, I don't think the diagnosis should equate to giving up all physical activity by any means. So, we talk about what would be a realistic exercise routine, a realistic daily routine to preserve that quality of life. And then certainly, we're offering support in the form of personal support from me, their provider, and a palliative care team who can focus on chronic symptom management. Certainly, there are patient support groups and national organizations that my patients can lean into. We're trying to treat the whole body rather than just the heart.

Announcer:

That was Dr. Joban Vaishnav discussing supportive strategies for newly diagnosed patients with ATTR-CM. To access this and other episodes in our series, visit *Heart Matters* on ReachMD.com, where you can Be Part of the Knowledge. Thanks for listening!