

Naturopathic Doctors in Oncology

LOW DOSE NALTREXONE

*Due to Naltrexone being a restricted substance, your ND is not able to prescribe this. However, this may be something we encourage you to explore with your MD.

Low-dose Naltrexone or LDN is a new and experimental therapy for cancer. LDN is particularly indicated in cancers of breast, ovary, uterus, kidney, bladder, prostate, lung, throat, liver, pancreas, colon, rectum, carcinoids (neuroendocrine), neuroblastoma, lymphocytic leukemia, lymphoma and melanoma.

Cancer cells have receptors for opiates. The mu opiate receptor is particularly involved in cell proliferation and angiogenesis. Morphine and related narcotic drugs actually increase cancer cell growth, invasion and metastasis.

Methyl-naltrexone is an opioid antagonist, used to detox alcohol and drug addicts in doses of 50 mg and up. Fortunately, LDN therapy uses less than 10% of the doses used for drug problems, and is therefore very safe. Other than some start-up issues, it is very comfortable to take, not expensive, and has no interactions with chemotherapy or other oncology drugs.

In very small doses of 4.0 to 4.5 mg at bedtime, it is a strong immune-modulator. Dr. Bernard Biharis was using it for AIDS when he observed a remission from lymphoma. Nighttime dosing increases met-enkephalins, beta-endorphins, NK cell number and activity, cytotoxic CD8+ T-cell number in circulation, and may induce apoptosis via increased number and density of tumor cell endorphin receptors. .

Adverse effects are rare, but may include reflux, nausea, vomiting, dyspepsia, liver dysfunction, dry mouth, somnolence, weight loss and decreased libido. Again, increasing the dose slowly will solve most problems. Its half-life in the blood is about 13 hours.

Good responses are seen in about 60% of cases. Improvement may be seen by a month, and remission within 6 months. 50% of cases see arrest of tumor growth, and about 30% see tumors shrink. Dr. Berkson, MD suggests LDN with alpha lipoic acid for dermatomyositis. LDN often eases myalgia, as seen with drugs such as aromatase inhibitors. It is also useful in fibromyalgia and colitis.

See www.lowdosenaltrexone.org and www.LDN-help.com