



Improving Lives • Finding the Cure

PATIENTS
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PROGRESS 2011

Mary Ming-Mosley



I get to stand before you because of the novel therapies for myeloma.

But twenty years ago, I was too tired to stand at all. I was a fourth grade teacher.

I taught my students California history and fractions, but when I almost fell asleep on them while reading one afternoon, I knew something was terribly wrong. Day-after-day, I'd been coming home to collapse on the bed at 4PM and get up in the morning, just as worn out.

My doctor said it was anemia.

For two years, he said it was anemia. I was a single mom with three teenagers, sure, but they weren't *that* exhausting.

Then, in 1994, the doctor went on vacation. That vacation saved my life.

I saw someone new who right away diagnosed myeloma. Of course, he also told me I'd be dead in two years. I'd always had Faith, and that just didn't sound right to me.

"Is there anything else we can do?" I asked.

So he sent me to a specialist and I got a stem cell transplant. I went into remission for 7 ½ years, got back to work and got back to raising my kids. But then, the myeloma came back. In 2003, I underwent another stem cell transplant, but I didn't do as well as the first time.

That's when they put me on VELCADE®. Since I went on VELCADE, it's been the one constant in my treatment. It's the one thing that always helps me.

Two months ago, I started on VELCADE subcutaneous. It's just a shot, I don't have wait for an IV. It's just—in and out. VELCADE has kept me going and feeling well enough to live my life.

I planted a new rose bush every time I underwent a treatment. Now I've got a regular garden. The bees love them. So do I. They remind me of all I've gone through to get here.



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These days, I like to wear purple dresses and red hats—at the same time. I do all sorts of activities with my Red Hatters and my church. I co-founded the Inland Valley Support Group.

A student of mine recently let me know that she thanked me, her fourth grade teacher, in her Ph.D. dissertation. Of course, that meant a lot to me. But it meant even more that I am able to be here to hear it.

I recently got to see my granddaughter, Kourtney, graduate high school. All my grandchildren have nurtured me through my treatments. Kourtney is with me today. She likes to go to our myeloma support group too. I'm looking forward to seeing her graduate college next. And all her siblings and cousins after her.