

SPEAKER 1: So systemic sclerosis, when it's diffuse, is a very difficult to treat disease with a limited number of therapies. In our experience, we've treated in the range of 30 to 50 patients with scleroderma with this disease in the last 10 to 20 years, and we've seen a range of results. Some patients do great. They'll have really extensive disease, and in a relatively short timeframe of three to six months, they'll go from not able to move to being able to walk again. We've seen excellent results.

That's not the norm for every patient, but that would be a great result that we've seen. On the other side of things, the most common thing we see is a stabilization of disease. And this stabilization essentially means that the disease, you know, you halt the progression. That really was the reason that you started ECP from the beginning. And the major question really comes up at the end of the day in these patients that you stabilize their disease.

So you go, you know, you do your tests for six months to a year and you stabilize things. And then the question is not only do you continue, but when do you stop, how do you stop, and these sort of questions. And so what we do instead at Yale University is that we don't stop the treatment cold turkey, but instead, to test whether, you know, you're really holding the disease stable, is that you increase the time between treatments.

So say you're at a monthly maintenance frequency, so then you extend it out to every five weeks, to every six weeks, and you can extend it out. We extend it out to about a maximum of 10 weeks to really see that the patient is stabilized and is continuing to do well. At that point, with that maximum of about 10 weeks between treatments, if they're still stable, then that then that would be the clinical indication to consider stopping the therapy. But this question does come up frequently of, you know, my disease hasn't gotten any worse, but I haven't gotten better. And so this logic, we have to talk through with patients quite frequently.