



UNC
KIDNEY CENTER

Podcast Transcript:

Dr. Ron Falk

Membranous Nephropathy Treatments

“Membranous Treatments: Treatment for Anemia”

Patient: My doctor has said that I am anemic and that this is common with people who have Membranous Nephropathy, who are spilling a lot of protein into their urine. Will my anemia get better if my proteinuria goes away, or do I need to be treated with something especially for anemia?

Dr Falk: I'm not entirely sure why patients with Membranous Nephropathy become anemic. Certainly people with kidney dysfunction of any kind become anemic, because the protein called erythropoietin or EPO for short, made by the kidney, tells the bone marrow to make blood. So if your kidneys aren't working well, then the amount of EPO will go down and you'll get anemic. And then, getting a drug that is a genetic form of erythropoietin- and there are several of those now, are useful for the treatment of anemia.

But why patients with Membranous Nephropathy who have normal kidney function get anemic is not clear. It is not certain at all that you would need a recombinant or genetic erythropoietin. But what is clear, is that if your disease goes into remission and the proteinuria goes away, then you won't need to get treated for anemia, as the anemia will get better all by itself.