

### Question 43 – Week of December 8

Which is the most effective therapy to induce remission in a patient with left-sided colitis requiring prednisone therapy?

- A. Resume smoking
- B. Switch his steroids to budesonide
- C. Start 6-MP/azathioprine
- D. Raise the dose of mesalamine to 6 gm/daily plus two 5-ASA enemas
- E. Discontinue the NSAIDs.

**Answer: C**

Although stopping smoking is a known trigger for ulcerative colitis and there are scattered case reports of improvement of colitis with resumption of smoking, there are no evidence-based studies to recommend this modality before starting immunomodulators. 6-MP has shown evidence of steroid sparing and induction of remission in about 60-70% of subjects. Very high doses of mesalamine have not been studied and although NSAIDs may be worsening his colitis, steroid sparing with 6-MP/AZA is the treatment of choice.

#### **References:**

1. Hanauer SJ. Medical therapy for ulcerative colitis. *Gastroenterology* 2004;126:1582-1592.
2. George J, et al. The long-term outcome of ulcerative colitis treated with 6-mercaptopurine. *Am J Gastroenterol* 1996;91:1711-1714.