



# PEP TALK



PULMONARY EDUCATION PROGRAM  
LITTLE COMPANY OF MARY HOSPITAL

*December 2019*

## *PEP Gym Holiday Hours*

(by Kurt Antonius)

The PEP Gym will be closed from December 21 until January 2. This will give our hard working staff a nice holiday break to rest up and spend time with their families. The gym will reopen on January 3. That doesn't mean we can rest! It's important to get exercise, so keep active during the break!

## *PEP Gym Party is Dec. 20*

(by Kurt Antonius)

The annual PEP Gym pot luck holiday celebration is December 20. It's a great reason to come in, exercise and then have a bite to eat and drink. As usual, there will be lots of good food, desserts, munchies and more.

## *A New Hope for COPD?*

In 2007, the National Institute of Health's National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute funded a research study called The COPD Genetic Epidemiology (COPDGene®). The largest

study of its kind in the world, COPDGene® has followed over 10,000 smokers for 10 years. Much of this research has been undertaken in your own backyard, under the directorship of Dr. Casaburi at [The Lundquist Institute for Biomedical Innovation at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center](#) (formerly called LA BioMed). Indeed, many PEP Pioneers volunteered as subjects for this important study.

A [Special Issue of the Journal of the COPD Foundation](#) sees three new reports that instill new hope for COPD patients. Primary care physicians and pulmonary specialists are often confronted by individuals whose lung function appears normal but complain of breathing difficulty. One article with over 100 authors (including Dr. Casaburi and his team) reports that, even in the absence of changes in lung function, symptoms and changes in lung structures observable on CT imaging should not be ignored! These conditions might become termed "pre-COPD", in much the same way that the phrase "pre-diabetes" has been coined

to describe patients who do not yet meet the diagnostic criteria for diabetes. Patients with symptoms or CT findings have increased risk for advancing to COPD, as well as increased risk of hospitalization and mortality. This research finding provides physicians with new evidence upon which to base therapeutic and diagnostic recommendations.

Although there are limitations to this work (for example, that all the participants were smokers, whereas as many as 25% of COPD patients may have never smoked), the research suggests new information about COPD subtypes that we did not previously know. It is unacceptable that over the last 15 years only 1 drug of a new class has been approved for COPD. This research identifies new characteristics of possible and probable COPD that can help to drive the search for new drugs at an earlier stage of disease. It is likewise unacceptable that pulmonary rehabilitation, a remarkably effective therapy, is rarely available, under reim-

bursed and tragically underutilized. This research begs the question whether disease progression in patients with pre-COPD could be slowed by providing access to this incredible therapy.

In their editorial, the COPD Foundation express their frustration that despite COPD's global impact (300 million people world-wide have COPD), COPD continues to receive only a fraction of the research funding provided to other major chronic diseases. Research, such as the [COPDGene® study](#), is the engine that powers medical progress. An essential part of the ability to make these ground breaking discoveries is patient participation in research!

The [Rehabilitation Clinical Trials Center](#) at The Lundquist Institute is a world leader in COPD research and needs your sup-

port. If you have a history of smoking or symptoms of shortness of breath, please consider participating in their research registry by calling (310) 222-8200 and making an appointment for a lung function test and health screen. You even receive \$35 reimbursement for your participation! And your efforts could help shape the future of lung health.

Harry B Rossiter PhD  
Investigator, The Lundquist Institute  
Associate Professor, UCLA

### *8 Ways to Fend Off the Flu Bug*

- Get a flu shot
- Don't touch your mouth with your fingers
- Move away from sick people
- Don't touch public bathroom handles
- Do not touch doctors' office

- building entrance handles
- Minimize kissing and handshakes
  - Wash your hands frequently
  - Carry a bottle of Purell



### *January Babies*



- |                        |                      |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Cheryl King          | 12 Melba House       |
| 1 Caroline Zahnpfennig | 16 Erika Butryn      |
| 3 Freddie Austin       | 23 Brooke Gilchrist  |
| 5 Purita Santillian    | 24 Mary Kay Erickson |
| 10 William Leveroni    | 27 Bill Paul         |
| 12 Ella Rodgers        | 29 Sarah Albright    |
| 12 Dennis Striker      | 29 Behzad Pak        |
|                        | 30 Patricia Torrence |



PEP PIONEERS is a non-profit corporation comprised of graduates of the Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program at Providence Little Company of Mary Hospital. We are dependent on private donations and fundraisers to finance events and purchase equipment that benefit all of its members. Tax Deductible donations

may be made to:  
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