



# PEP TALK



PULMONARY EDUCATION PROGRAM LITTLE  
COMPANY OF MARY HOSPITAL

August 2019

## August Picnic!

*(By Sarah Albright)*

The August Luncheon will be our annual picnic at Victor Park in Torrance on August 15th. It will be from 11:30 AM to 2:00 PM. The fee will be \$10.00 per person. There might be shade at the park so please bring a sweater and chairs to sit on.

The lunch is a pot-luck, so please bring your favorite dishes, salads, or desserts. They can either be homemade or store bought. PEP will supply delicious Italian sausages, hot dogs, and hamburgers with all the fixings. Cold drinks will also be provided.



After lunch there will be Bingo where you can win fun prizes! If you have any books, or miscellaneous items to donate for the white elephant table please bring them to the picnic. This is always an exciting event, we hope to see you there!

## Recap: Last week PEP Harbor Cruise a Whale of a Success

*(By Kurt Antonius)*

Forty PEP Pioneers boarded the

90 foot long Yacht, Spirit, for a terrific private tour of the San Pedro and Long



Beach Harbors on Thursday, July 25. With perfect weather, the boat's outside areas were busy along with the cool inside of the boat. A hot and tasty Mexican buffet was served not



long after the ship departed the Parker's Lighthouse docks. The captain cruised by the USS Iowa battleship, an active Federal Prison, a colony of unique Har-



bor Seals, Lane Victory WW2 Liberty ship, Queen Mary passenger ship, Vincent Thomas bridge, and much more.

A special bus, provided free of charge thanks to LA Supervisor Janice Hahn's office, provided round trip transportation from the PEP parking lot.



## How to Avoid Harm from Vitamin B12 Deficiency in Seniors

*(By Leslie Kernisan)*

### A Vitamin B12 Deficiency

You know that vitamins and nutrition are important for a senior's health. So you've been encouraged to eat right and take a daily multivitamin. But did you know that even among seniors who do this, many still end up developing a serious deficiency in one particular vitamin? It's Vitamin B12.

It's common, serious, and worst of all, commonly overlooked until it causes significant health

*(Continued on page 2)*

problems. But if you know the symptoms and risk factors, you can get a vitamin B12 deficiency detected. Treatment is safe and effective, as long as you catch the problem before permanent damage occurs. Here's what to know.

**How Vitamin B12 Deficiency Harms a Senior's Health**

In the body, vitamin B12 — also known as cobalamin — is especially vital to making red blood cells, and maintaining proper function of nerve cells. When vitamin B12 levels are low, a person can develop health problems related to red blood cells and nerve cells not working well. The most common problems are:

**Anemia.** This means low red blood cell count. Red blood cells carry oxygen in the blood, so anemia can cause fatigue or shortness of breath.

**Neuropathy.** This means nerves in the body are not working well. This can cause a variety of symptoms, including tingling, numbness, burning, poor balance and walking difficulties.

**Cognitive impairment.** This means that nerve cells in the brain are not working well. This can cause memory problems, irritability, and even dementia.

**Why Low Vitamin B12 Levels Are Common in Older Adults**

As people get older, their ability to absorb vitamin B12 tends to decrease. This is because seniors often develop problems with the acids and stomach enzymes needed to process the vitamin. Common risk factors for low vita-



min B12 levels in older adults include:

- Low levels of stomach acid,** which can be due to weakening of the stomach lining, or to medications that reduce stomach acid.
- Medications,** which interfere with vitamin B12 absorption.
- Alcoholism,** which irritates the stomach and sometimes is linked to a poor diet.
- Surgeries** that remove parts of the stomach or small intestine.

**Why Vitamin B12 Deficiency is Often Missed in Seniors**

Vitamin B12 deficiency is often missed because the symptoms — fatigue, anemia, neuropathy, memory problems, or walking difficulties — are quite common in older adults, and can easily be caused by something else. Also, vitamin B12 deficiency tends to come on very slowly, so people often go through a long period of being mildly deficient. Unlike many problems that affect seniors, vitamin B12 deficiency is quite treatable. You just need to make sure it's detected, and then make a treatment plan to raise levels and keep them steady.

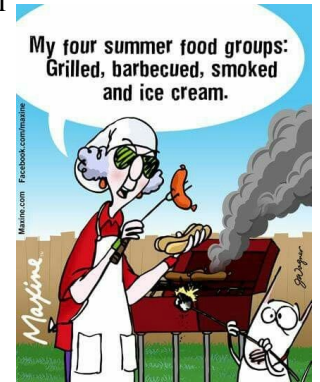
**How Vitamin B12 Deficiency is Diagnosed and Treated**

A simple blood test can check vitamin B12 levels. If the blood tests confirm a deficiency, the doctors will prescribe vitamin B12 supplementation to get the body's levels back up. Protect your health with this simple test to make sure you have enough vitamin B12.

**September Luncheon**

The September luncheon will be

on Thursday, September 26th. We had to move the date back a week because the staff will be at a conference. The topic will be lung transplants. It should be a wonderful talk!



**In Memorium**

Roberta (Bobbie) Stojanovski

**September Babies**

- |                     |                    |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 4 Irene Konyi       | 23 Tony Gomez      |
| 6 Mercedes Thompson | 23 Gary Kenner     |
| 8 Millie Maloney    | 24 Donna Marsh     |
| 10 Ellen Bullock    | 25 Jo Graves       |
| 11 Loretta Carson   | 25 Gretchen Lewis  |
| 11 Noriko Shintakuo | 26 Aurelio Valdez  |
| 12 Ronald Ihendorf  | 29 Paula Schneider |
| 14 Bob Gellman      | 30 Juyoung Jang    |
| 16 John Monaghan    |                    |

Editor-in-Chief : Sarah Albright

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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