



PEP TALK



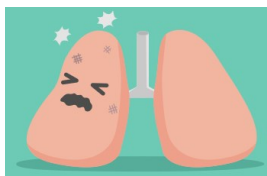
PULMONARY EDUCATION PROGRAM LITTLE COMPANY OF MARY HOSPITAL

December 2018

Making the Case for Pulmonary Rehabilitation

(By Cristin Trecroce)

Water amazes and scares the daylights out of me. If I think about swimming while in the water, I panic. What if my lungs run out of air while I am swimming? What if I inhale the water and can't breathe? I can sink, if I sink, I can die. Hello, I can die! What if you had to worry about your breathing all the time, not just when you were in water? Millions of people with COPD have to do this. They have to focus on their breathing as if they were underwater negotiating between the energy needed to breathe and the energy needed to swim or function. About 30 million people in the United States have COPD with half of these 30 million not even realizing they have the disease. The half that is undiagnosed, go throughout their days, compensating for their symptoms without recognizing that their lungs are changing. COPD can



cause changes to the lungs that

can be subtle at first but then progress to outright lung failure.

Exacerbations of the disease can happen over time or abruptly, when the body's lung limitations become overwhelmed. Overwhelming stressors can be from illnesses or another health condition. If this happens repeatedly, the lungs get weaker. The weaker the lungs get, then the more likely COPD exacerbations can happen. The process can continue, like a chain reaction, resulting in disability.

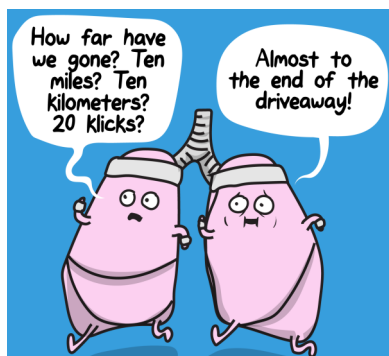
November is COPD awareness month. During this month take a few minutes to focus on your breathing. Likely your breathing is something you don't think much about, but rather take for granted. What would it be like if you had to really focus on your breathing while simultaneously doing big tasks? Would you get dressed, make your own meals, shop or socialize? Probably not. If you feared losing your breath, you would naturally avoid difficult tasks. This is why COPD leads to shame, social isolation and poor nutrition.

There is help available. Although there is no cure for COPD there are options for managing the disease. Treatments for COPD include medications, oxygen, physical therapy and sometimes surgery. The best treatment starts after a proper diagnosis is made by a pulmonary function test. This test measures the lung's capacity to fully take air in and blow it out. Pulmonary function tests do not require needles or any special equipment. They can be done at a doctor's office by breathing into a tube. Once the diagnosis of COPD is established, the journey to help begins.

My favorite treatment option for COPD is pulmonary rehabilitation. Here patients learn practical strategies for managing their breathing while performing daily routines. Each individual in pulmonary rehabilitation receives an exercise program specifically designed for them based on their lung and muscle capacity. Programs are developed by a team that includes a social worker, nutritionist, respiratory therapist,

(Continued on page 2)

exercise specialist and physician. Exercise at pulmonary rehab is carefully monitored to make sure participants are safe. There are social benefits to participating in pulmonary rehabilitation, as it brings together individuals going through similar circumstances who can share ideas and experiences that are unique to them. Pulmonary rehabilitation teaches classes on handling of airway secretions, energy conservation, smoking cessation, safe exercise techniques, proper use of medication and oxygen and stress management. The classes and unique exercise training help COPD patients regain and maintain independence in a safe environment tailored specifically to their individual needs.



If you encounter anyone who has COPD, ask them to consult their doctor to find out if pulmonary rehabilitation is available to them. If you notice someone with chronic cough and shortness of breath, who has not yet been diagnosed with COPD, encourage them to get a pulmonary function test. COPD leads to long term disability, loneliness, anxiety, nutrition deficiencies and hospital admissions. Better disease management starts with disease awareness

and recognition. Starting this month, spread COPD awareness and be a part of a chain reaction to better breathing.

PFF Summit

(By Valeria Hatcher)

Ever wonder if there is a bigger organization than your local support group for answers about Pulmonary Fibrosis? The Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation sponsors a meeting every two years called the PFF Summit. The next PFF Summit will be held November 7-9, 2019 in San Antonio, TX. It provides an opportunity to meet with physicians, researchers, patients, caregivers, industry representatives, and members of the international PF community—all in one setting. To sign up and to get more information about the patient sessions, go to: <http://www.pffsummit.org/>.

Thank you!

(By Jackie Tosolini)

Betsy and Jackie dropped off the gifts to Harbor-UCLA last week and they were very appreciative of our donations. Lots of patients received toiletries, books, toys, slippers, stuffed animals, and much more. Your donations have helped many have a better holiday, thank you so much!

Looking Ahead



Holiday Times

(By Sarah Albright)

There will be a gym holiday

party on December 14th from 1:30 to 4:30. Please bring a dish to share! This will be our last day until January 3rd. The pulmonary staff wishes everyone a happy and healthy holiday and new year!

In Memoriam

Patty Perry

Reminder!
The December luncheon
will be on December
13th, a week earlier!

December Babies



- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Del Perry | 19 Connie Quintana |
| 2 Patricia Elzie | 20 Joyce Rodgers |
| 2 Mary Ann Priore | 20 Phyllis Friel |
| 12 Jennifer Harrison | 22 Roberta Moore |
| 15 Teri Neilson | 27 Elizabeth Huntoon |
| 16 Anne Robinson | |

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:

PEP PIONEERS
Attn:

Pulmonary Rehabilitation
20929 Hawthorne Blvd.
Torrance, CA 90503
310-303-7079
www.peppioneers.com