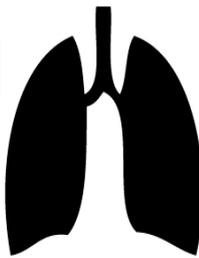


CANBERRA  
**LUNG LIFE**  
SUPPORT GROUP



**Newsletter April 2012**

Providing a supportive and informative environment for people with a variety of lung conditions and their carers.

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**Next Meeting**  
**12 April Thursday 2012**  
**10.15 am – 12 noon**

**The Weston Club**  
**1 Liardet St**  
**Weston ACT**

**Speaker:**  
**Dr Mark Hurwitz**, respiratory specialist speaking  
on the latest movements in the respiratory world,  
such as new medications and treatments.

**Dates for your diary**

**Thursday 5 April 2012** Lung Life Support Group Meeting  
**Wednesday 27 June 2012** World Spirometry Day  
**Tuesday 14 August 2012** Session with Physio students @ UC

**March Meeting Report**  
**Chris Moyle**

Our speaker Lucy Costas, spoke on the support provided by the Red Cross and Colleen's post mastectomy service. Many of us know Lucy from Air Liquide, where she worked for 18 years. After leaving Air Liquide Lucy, with her sleep science and respiratory science background, considered working night shift at a sleep laboratory. Instead she chose to volunteer for Red Cross Telecross, who then asked her to work for them.

Telecross is a telephone service run by Red Cross. Trained volunteers phone selected, isolated and vulnerable people in their homes every morning at an agreed time – between 7am and 10am. These

*Disclaimer: the information in this newsletter comes from a variety of sources and is intended as a guide only.*

phone calls are life saving and must never be missed. The aim is to keep people safe at home and provide some social contact.

The ACT has 120 people who are phoned by about 100 volunteers. The south-eastern NSW area including Tumut and the South Coast is also serviced and has 80 clients. New volunteers and clients are always welcome and it is a simple matter to register by phoning Red Cross on 1300 388 620 or 6234 7630. Volunteers' phone calls are brief and to the point. If there is no answer over a 20 minute period Red Cross will organise for a nominated personal contact to go to the house.

TeleCHAT is another service provided by Red Cross. A volunteer is matched with a participant based on their interests and hobbies. The volunteer phones on a weekly basis for a longer, open ended chat.

Lucy's association with Colleen's Post Mastectomy Connection began when Lucy had a mastectomy in 2003. She visited Colleen's and now works there on a part-time basis.

Colleen's Post Mastectomy Connection, located at Unit 3, 60 Dundas Court, Philip is owned by Colleen Brandstetter and stocks a comprehensive range of products. After a mastectomy Colleen travelled to Germany where they have very good quality post mastectomy prosthetics and bras. She was then inspired to open her own shop in Canberra selling these imported products. Her bras and prostheses are also suitable for stroke patients and patients with burns or frozen shoulder, plus women with a fuller figure. Swimwear, sleep wear, wigs, hats and scarves are also available.

Colleen was awarded an Order of Australia medal for her work in 2009.

### **The Australian National Botanic Gardens' People Mover**

The Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens have funded the purchase of a 14 seater electric passenger bus for use in the ANBG. The bus will be arriving in late April and will provide a new and exciting way for visitors to experience the Gardens through;



- ◆ **Ride, Stop and Talk Tours** - a taste of the Gardens in one hour Free shuttle bus for events
- ◆ Booked Bus Guided Tours – to be confirmed after initial 3 month trial of **Ride, Stop and Talk Tours**

Trained Volunteer drivers will drive the bus. There will be a cost for the tours.

A targeted marketing program will focus on attracting family, mobility restricted and international visitors to enjoy this new tour product. Initially **Ride, Stop and Talk Tours** will be run on Saturday and Sunday with the intention of expanding the service if demand is strong.

### **The Four Stages of Life**

- 1) You believe in Santa Claus.
- 2) You don't believe in Santa Claus.
- 3) You are Santa Claus..
- 4) You look like Santa Claus.

## Chronic Care Discussion

Helen Cotter

Helen and I recently attended forums/workshops as part of community consultation for the development of the ACT Chronic Disease Strategy. The previous strategy, which emphasised preventative health, finished in 2011 and planning is underway for the next strategy which will concentrate on overcoming the barriers that people with chronic diseases meet, living with their condition.

In both sessions, many of the same issues were brought up:

- Using the term 'chronic conditions' is preferable to 'chronic diseases' as not all are diseases
- having a streamlined system instead of 'silos' where one section doesn't know what the other section is doing
- having a liaison person/social worker to assist someone diagnosed with a chronic condition find their way through the health minefield of what assistance is available
- taking into account the social/community aspects instead of just the medical and involving community groups more.

The workshop also raised the interesting point about the limbo period when a person is being diagnosed - this sometimes takes quite a while for some people and yet there is no extra support for them during this difficult time.

The new ACT Government strategy may contain the following goals for a person with a chronic condition:

- doesn't have to repeat their story
- has a management plan supporting self-management, goals for improvement and actions to take for acute incidents
- is aware of support options and how to access them
- has their care co-ordinated and managed
- understands their need for and adopts secondary prevention
- receives the best care in the best place at the best time
- is supported by a patient-centred, high quality, evidence based system.

The goals aren't set in concrete and may change before any goals are adopted.

Many thanks to those who gave feedback about chronic disease/conditions issues to take to the forum/workshop.

### **Previous strategy achievements**

Here's a summary of some of the achievements of the ACT Government's recent 3 year strategy:

- improved disability admission and discharge processes
- improved co-ordination in Chronic Disease Care Program
- shared Care Guidelines with GPs
- improved uptake of respecting Patient Choices
- Chronic Diseases Management Register
- Home Tele-monitoring
- progression of eHealth
- self-management courses
- Chronic Disease Telephone Coaching Service

## Forthcoming seminars

### "Managing Chronic Pain"

**Randolph Sparks**, psychologist specialising in chronic pain, will speak on practical ways for people with chronic conditions to successfully manage chronic pain.

**Date:** Thursday 5 April  
**Time:** 12pm-2pm  
**Venue:** Room 6, Griffin Centre, Canberra City  
**Cost:** Free  
Light lunch will be provided.

### "Managing Stress"

**Vicki Coghlan**, clinical psychologist at the Canberra Injury Management Centre, will speak on practical ways for people with chronic conditions to better manage stress.

**Date:** Thursday 26 April  
**Time:** 12pm-2pm  
**Venue:** Room 6, Griffin Centre, Canberra City  
**Cost:** Free  
Light lunch will be provided

### "Dealing with Depression"

**Professor Kathy Griffiths**, Professor at the Centre for Medical Research at the Australian National University and Director of the Depression and Anxiety Consumer Research Unit, will speak on practical ways for people with chronic conditions to deal with depression.

**Date:** Wednesday 30 May  
**Time:** 12pm-2pm  
**Venue:** Room 6, Griffin Centre, Canberra City  
**Cost:** Free  
Light lunch will be provided

For more information ring Ann Thompson 6262 5011

**Have you ever been guilty of looking at others your own age and thinking, surely I can't look that old? Well ... You'll love this!**

My name is Alice Smith and I was sitting in the waiting room for my first appointment with a new dentist. I noticed his Dental Diploma which bore his full name. Suddenly I remembered a tall, handsome, dark haired boy with the same name had been in my class in High School, some 30-odd years ago. Could he be the same guy that I had a secret crush on way back then?

Upon seeing him, however, I quickly discarded any such thought. This balding, grey haired man with the deeply lined face was far too old to have been my classmate. After he examined my teeth, I asked him if he had attended Morgan Park High School.



“Yes, Yes I did. I’m a Morganner!” He beamed with pride.

“When did you leave?” I asked.

He answered, “In 1965. Why do you ask?”

“You were in my Class!” I exclaimed.

He looked at me closely. Then the ugly, old, balding, grey haired, wrinkled, decrepit asked ...

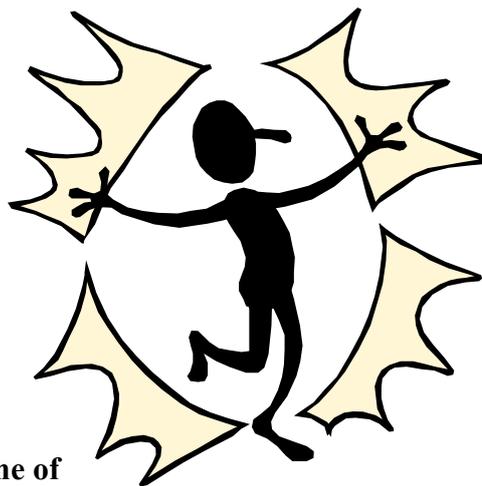
“What did you teach??”

## Why Exercise?

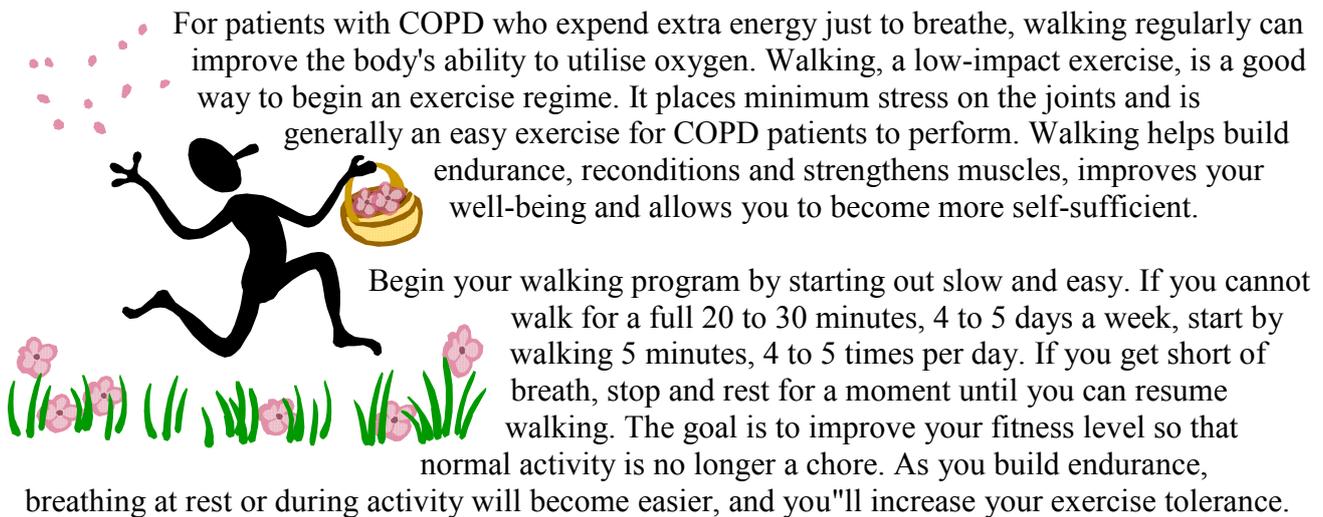
Exercise should be an essential part of everyone’s daily life. For those of us with COPD or other lung conditions, it is even more important. Implementing simple stretching and breathing exercises or a daily walk into our daily routine will help develop and maintain our physical and emotional well-being.

### **Benefits of exercise:**

- **Improves your quality of life:** Exercise gives you a feeling of control over your life and helps you to maintain your independence – shopping, household chores, everyday living.
- **Helps you use oxygen more efficiently:** Exercise strengthens the muscles you use for breathing as well as your other muscle groups causing you to expend less energy.
- **Improves long term health:**
  - ❖ Improves heart health
  - ❖ Improves health of arteries and veins
  - ❖ Lowers blood pressure
  - ❖ Lowers cholesterol
  - ❖ Less angina (chest pain)
- **Helps you maintain or lose weight:** Carrying more weight around than you should makes it harder to breathe. Exercise helps you control your weight making it easier to breathe.
- **Helps with osteoarthritis – the break down of bone of the joint cartilage, mostly in older people:**
  - ❖ Improves joint mobility and flexibility
  - ❖ Decreases pain and stiffness
  - ❖ Strengthens muscles around the affected joints to protect and absorb shock
  - ❖ Improves cartilage health by increasing blood flow
- **Helps with osteoporosis - reduced bone density resulting in a higher risk of broken bones and fractures:**
  - ❖ Helps maintain bone tissue
  - ❖ Reduces bone loss
  - ❖ Reduces the risk of falls
  - ❖ Reduces pain
- **Improving your mood:** Exercise is associated with alleviating depression and helps you relax thus causing you to use less energy.



- **Improving your sleep:** If you sleep better at night, you will have more energy during the day. Exercise helps all of us sleep better.
- **Improves Cognitive Function:** A study performed by Duke University and published in the January 2001 issue of *The Journal of Aging and Physical Activity* suggested that aerobic exercise improves cognitive functioning in older adults, particularly in the areas of memory, planning and organization. Significant improvement was also noted in the ability of study participants to "multi-task" or juggle a variety of intellectual tasks at the same time. The study concluded that exercise may be able to offset, at least in part, the decline in mental status that is often associated with aging.



**References:** [www.About.com.COPD](http://www.About.com.COPD)  
*Beat It*

## Wood Smoke Letter to the Editor

Congratulations to Ben Cubby for revealing the extent of health problems associated with neighbourhood wood smoke pollution problem.

As a matter of interest, in Canberra less than 4% of households burn wood for domestic heating, yet the Federal Environment Department reports they are responsible for 71% of Canberra's particle air pollution compared to cars at just 10%. They are also responsible for more than twice as much (66%) Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbon (PAH) air pollution as cars. That is the really toxic stuff in the air that is associated with cancers etc. On top of this, the Health Promotion Journal reported in 2005 that each wood heater in Canberra added more than \$8000 to the ACT's annual health bill. Meanwhile, many Canberra residents who suffer from heart and/or lung conditions are imprisoned in their homes each winter attached to an oxygen bottle or forced to travel to a warmer climate to escape the wood smoke pollution in their neighbourhoods. A friend of mine who has a serious lung condition spent last winter with her daughter in Townsville. The ACT Government encourages householders to transfer to cleaner more efficient forms of heating with a wood heater buyback program and it is slowly having a positive impact. But more could be done by Government's and a co-operative wood heating industry to rid our neighbourhoods of this annual environmental health problem.

Darryl Johnston  
 Canberra