

June 2013 Newsletter

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

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Next Meeting Thursday 13 June 2013
10.15 am – 12 noon
Burns Club, 8 Kett Street, Kambah
Speaker: Elaine Smith will speak on Home Help and what it means for us.

Dates for your diary

Thursday 11 July 2013 Canberra Lung Life Support Group Meeting
Tuesday 2 July 2013 Christmas in July
Wednesday 20 November 2013 World COPD Day

Report on May Meeting

Chris Moyle

Rusty Woodward, Jan and Rick from COTA (Council of the Ageing) discussed the role of COTA, ways to prevent falls and management of medicines. As a member of several ACT government standing committees, 'round tables' and departmental groups, COTA presents to government the perspective of the more mature Canberran in regard to a wide variety of areas. For example:

- mature age employment,
- retirement income,
- health,
- public transport in the ACT,
- housing,
- aged care services,
- cost of energy.

Prevention of Falls

Most falls occur in the home. To avoid falling:

- keep walkways free of clutter,
- be very careful around long oxygen cords,
- use non-slip rugs,
- wear comfortable, firm-fitting flat shoes with soles that grip,
- avoid poorly fitted slippers,
- install handrails on stairs and in the bathroom,
- ensure you have good lighting for security and moving around,
- have eyes and glasses checked every two years.



Exercise

Do some daily exercise: 10 minutes a day is better than no exercise at all. By strengthening your leg muscles you have less risk of falling. If you feel the need ask your GP for a referral to a Falls Clinic Assessment and exercise program. The service is free.

Dehydration causes light-headedness and a drop in blood pressure, making you more likely to fall.

Management of medicines

In Australia 140,000 people are hospitalised every year because of problems relating to medication. Half these admissions are the result of mistakes in taking medication and are preventable. It is important to know when to take your medication, to take it on time and to remember you have taken it. To remove any difficulties with taking tablets your pharmacist can place them in a blister pack. If in doubt about anything relating to your medication phone your pharmacist or the Medicines Line (1300 633 424 or 1300 Medicine) for advice or check out the reputable National Pharmaceutical Service (NPS) on line.

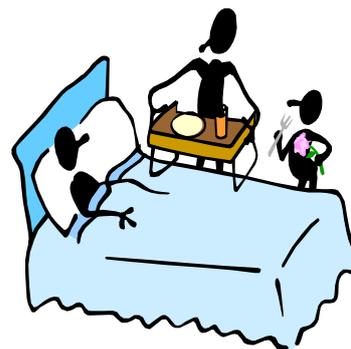
Keep an up to date list of your medication and their strength with you at all times in case of an emergency. Include your identification, emergency contact details and any allergies. Medical bracelets are available which have a code number for your GP or ambulance officer to ring to access your details.

For additional information call 1300 1400 50 or visit www.cotamembership.org.au.

The Main Messages

Helen Reynolds

1. Healthy ageing involves physical activity, healthy eating and a little sunshine.
2. Keep actively involved with family, friends and the community. The more you do the more you can do.
3. Be sensible and recognise your limitations. Do things safely and don't be too proud to ask for help.
4. Manage your health problems and medicines well.
5. Speak to your doctor about how you can do this together.
6. Make your home and its surroundings as safe as possible.
7. Have a plan on how to get help in an emergency.
8. Take steps to minimise any harm done in the event of a fall.



The A-Z of Preventative Health Care (D)

Chris Moyle and Helen Reynolds

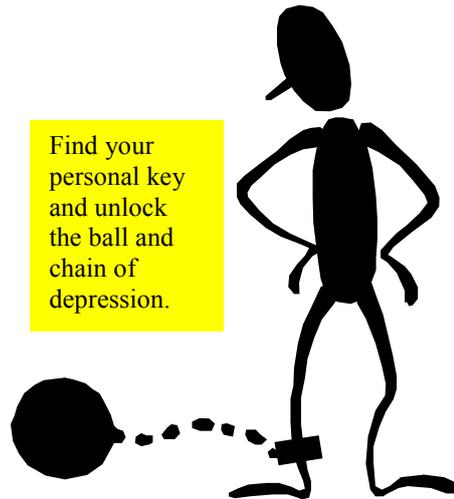
Depression

About.com's [Depression Guide](#), tells us [depression](#) is an illness caused by a chemical imbalance in your brain. People with COPD, who also suffer from depression and/or anxiety, are at a higher risk for [COPD exacerbation](#). As we all know having a chronic illness can be very depressing, but there are many things you can do to help the depression. You may not feel like making the effort to make changes but you need to force yourself or get someone to help you into action. Find someone to talk with. Depression is not permanent. It will pass. You can hasten its disappearance by focussing on your pride, your friends, your future goals and your positive surroundings. When you believe that things will get better, they will. (From "*Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions*")

Remember, you don't have to suffer alone. If you have any of the following symptoms, seek medical attention as soon as possible:

- feelings of hopelessness and helplessness,
- change in sleep patterns,
- weight gain or weight loss,
- loss of pleasure or interest in things,
- social isolation,
- fatigue,
- feelings of worthlessness.

If symptoms persist see your GP or ring Mental Health Treatment Team on 1800 629354.



Dry mouth

As we get older the capacity of salivary glands to work efficiently diminishes and the likelihood of suffering from dry mouth increases. Dry mouth can also be a side effect of certain medication.

It has been estimated that 400 prescription as well as non-prescription drugs can give rise to dry mouth. Medication used to treat health problems like diarrhea, asthma, hypertension and cold can interfere with saliva production. Millions of people today use beta-blockers and diuretics which can reduce saliva production causing dryness in the mouth.

Other medications that are found to negatively affect the functioning of salivary glands are:

- antidepressants,
- decongestants,
- antihistamines,
- muscle relaxants,
- painkillers,

To get relief, drink water or use a product specifically formulated to relieve the symptoms of dry mouth which your pharmacist will recommend. Excessive or loud snoring can also cause mouth dryness.

Read more at Buzzle: <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/dry-mouth-at-night.html>

For Sale

German manufactured Autoadapt Turnout Swivel Car Seat Base (RP \$14000). The Carony Wheelchair System is both a class leading wheelchair and fully approved automotive seat. The Carony Wheelchair system opens up a whole new world of independence for the user, with increased independence and convenience for the users and those who would assist them.

For photos and more information click below:

<http://www.gumtree.com.au/s-ad/mawson/other-automotive/bev-seat-autoadapt-turnout-swivel-car-seat-base>

Price: \$6000

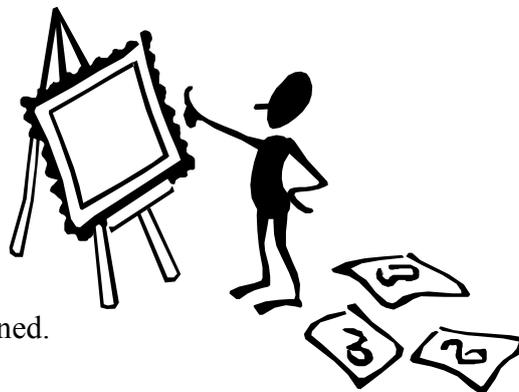
If you have any questions contact Mila 0422343938 or Cheda: 0402385973.

COPD Working Group

Helen Cotter

Commencing in February, Beth Forbes, the COPD Chronic Care Nurse, organised a COPD Working Group for people working in and interested in the area of COPD. The group aims to share information and to improve services and delivery impacting on people with COPD. Members of the group consist of people who work in the area of COPD:

- Department of Sleep and Respiratory Medicine,
- the Chronic Care Program,
- Pulmonary Rehabilitation,
- Chronic Disease Management,
- Ward 6A,
- Pharmacy,
- GP Liaison and so on.



Membership is constantly under review and may be broadened.

Helen Cotter is the consumer representative. She attended the last meeting in April where various items including efficiencies in hospital and home based care for COPD patients were discussed, along with updates provided from the GP Liaison Officer, Pulmonary Rehab and Lungs in Action – and information on a Professional Development Day. Beth asked the group to put on their thinking caps about World COPD Day on Wednesday 20 November.

It's good to see such a group up and running. We look forward to beneficial outcomes in the area of COPD.

UDDERLY RIDICULOUS

Chris Moyle

Skywhale is a 34m-long, 23m-high hot air balloon sculpture designed by renowned artist and former Canberran, Patricia Piccinini, to celebrate Canberra's Centenary. It weighs half a tonne and used more than 3.5km of fabric. It took 16 people seven months to design and make. It reminds me of an



English friend of mine who sometimes remarked, "That's a nice pair of Bristols" (not directed at me). "What do you mean?" I'd ask, and he'd gleefully reply, "Cockney rhyming slang – *Bristol City* – rhymes with "titties". I read that our Skywhale was indeed made by Cameron Balloons in Bristol, United Kingdom. I must say they've outdone themselves this time.

A Return to the Weston Club

Chris Moyle

Eighteen people returned to the Weston Club on Thursday 23 May for a fund-raising luncheon at which our Club coffers increased by \$100. Thank you all.

I like long walks, especially when they are taken by people who annoy me.

And then she asked "What's the best form of birth control after 50?"
I said "Nudity."

Christmas in July



Pam will be taking names at the June Meeting. If you are unable to attend the Meeting and wish to participate in early Christmas festivities ring Pam on 6288 2053 or Chris on 6288 8463. If, for whatever reason, you find yourself unable to attend, please contact either Pam or Chris to cancel. If you fail to cancel you will be obliged to pay for your lunch without the pleasure of eating it!

Inviting you to a COTA ACT focus group on Transport for Older Canberrans

COTA ACT has been undertaking research on transport for older people in the ACT.

In the second week of June, COTA will be inviting older people to attend focus group meetings to discuss their experiences with transport in Canberra and to suggest ways in which the system could be improved. Details of the focus groups are as follows:

Using Community Transport

Community Hall, Hughes Community Centre
Wednesday 12 June **Time: 10am-12pm**

Getting around with a mobility or health impairment

Community Hall, Hughes Community Centre
Wednesday 12 June **Time: 1pm-3pm**

Getting around by taxi

Community Hall, Hughes Community Centre
Thursday 13 June **Time: 11.30am-1.30pm**

Getting around by car

Library, Hughes Community Centre
Friday 14 June **Time: 1pm-3pm**

Using Buses

Library, Hughes Community Centre
Monday 17 June **Times: 10am-12pm, 1pm-3pm**

Anyone who is interested in attending a focus group session or finding out more about the research can contact Jane Thomson on 6282 3777 or via email at policy@cotaact.org.au

Walking can add minutes to your life. This enables you at 85 years old to spend an additional 5 months in a nursing home at \$2000 approximately a month.

I joined a health club last year, spent \$200. Haven't lost a kilo. Apparently you have to go there!

University of Canberra

Are you a COPD Patient who has just completed or enrolled in Pulmonary Rehabilitation?

Want to continue gaining the essential benefits from exercise and meet new people in a **FUN, SAFE** and **FRIENDLY** Environment?

We want you to be a part of a research project at the University of Canberra!

What you will need to do:

- Attend two weekly exercise sessions at the University of Canberra for 12 weeks.
- Complete the following assessment before and after the exercise intervention: body composition and bone mineral density test, lung function, leg strength, and aerobic fitness.

What we will do for you:

- Free exercise sessions supervised by qualified staff at The University of Canberra.
- Free bone mineral density and body composition assessment.
- Keep track of your strength and fitness levels.



Exercise Not Your Thing?

If you do not want to exercise, we are looking for participants who are willing to complete the assessments above in isolation, i.e. no exercise intervention, at the University of Canberra. Two testing sessions will be completed 12 weeks apart.

For more information:

If you are interested in participating or want further information please do not hesitate to contact:

Jaclyn Sweeny Ph: 0428 471223 Email: u3050999@uni.canberra.edu.au

Dr Kate Pumpa Ph: 62012936 Email: Kate.Pumpa@canberra.edu.au

Dr Julie Cooke Ph: 62012384 Email: Julie.Cooke@canberra.edu.au

