

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 March 2014
10.15 am – 12 noon
Burns Club, 8 Kett Street, Kambah
Guest Speaker: Michael Reid from Pegasus Healthcare

February Meeting

Helen Cotter

Three new members were welcomed to the Canberra Lung Life Support Group before we turned our attention to general matters including future events which you all need to write into your diary.

Future Events to be added to your diary

- **Chief Minister's Concert on 19 March 2014**
Members put their hands up to indicate interest in travelling to Erindale to hear the military band from Duntroon Military College perform.
- **Senior Expo on 20 March 2014**
It's on again - the Senior Expo at Budawang Building, the Exhibition Park Flemington Road Mitchell. It's a good Expo featuring many government and non-government organisations that deal with the community, especially the more senior members of the community. We'll have a stall there and we'd love as many people as possible to find us and say hullo. It's a good opportunity for us to find out what is going on in the community and maybe learn of some activities or events that we'd like to follow up.
- **Visit to Physio students at the University of Canberra on 8 April 2014**
A couple of additional members put their names forward to assist the future Health Care Workers who are studying at UC. The students practise their newly acquired skills on our members, but always under the watchful eyes of their lecturers.
- **Education Day, Tuesday 29 April 2014**
As in past years it's at the Southern Cross Club, Woden but in a different room - closer to the toilets! As usual we will have three speakers, with lunch provided in the middle. Details are still being negotiated but should be finalised by next Meeting. If you require a special diet for lunch please let the Southern Cross Club know.

Among the topics discussed in general business was soreness above the ears caused by the oxygen tubing. It is a worry to those of us who are on oxygen. Fellow users suggested using a soft tube around the tubing, saying that it could be bought from oxygen outlets such as BOC or AirLiquide. Other suggestions included making sure the oxygen tubing was not too tight and didn't pull on the ears. All agreed it could be a problem.

Guest Speaker - Suzanne Eastwood

Chris Moyle

Suzanne Eastwood from Health Care Consumers Association (HCCA) wears many different hats. Some of them are:

- knowing how to gain access to the right Medicare funded treatment for the individual
- helping people give up smoking. In the Quit Program multi-cultural people receive information in their own language
- talking to pharmacy students, educating them on doing a proper individual assessment to ascertain the correct dose of nicotine replacement a person needs to quit. Currently she is involved in making Canberra Hospital smoke free
- running empowering sessions to help the consumer deal more effectively with GPs and other health professionals.

Allied Health Team Care

Arrangements are in place in the ACT for your GP to co-ordinate your allied health professionals:

- dietician
- psychologist
- podiatrist
- physiotherapist
- exercise.

In order to get the fullest information regarding this initiative - what is available, how many times in a twelve month period you may access, the cost, the Medibank rebate. You can see more than one type of professional each year. Sometimes a gap fee is charged, but you can phone and ask beforehand.

There is also a range of low cost treatments available from fully supervised final year students (physio, dietician, massage etc.) at the University of Canberra Clinic.

PBS (Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme)

Generic medicines should be cheaper than the brand name. For people with a health card this is quite a good saving to have. However generics can have different fillers which are unsuitable for some people and some conditions such as epilepsy. In this case the generic may cause a negative reaction and is not recommended. Ask your chemist/GP and if in doubt, **don't**.

Do your medicines need a check up?

A MedsCheck or Diabetes MedCheck will help you better manage your medicines. It will help:

- increase your knowledge about your medicines
- increase your confidence in using your medicines and
- reduce your risk of an avoidable trip to the hospital.

You can request a senior pharmacist to come to your home to review all medicines. The pharmacist will give you a report to take to your GP.

After hospital

When leaving the hospital it is important to check your tablets against the tablets you were given before leaving hospital. You may bring home a packet of medicine, such as tablets to lower blood pressure. You take this but also resume the same medicine at home. The hospital medication can be in a different package with small writing which is difficult to read so you could unknowingly take two lots of the same medicine, overdose, and end up back in hospital. So beware! Take care!

Suzanne answered lots of questions and educated the group in all the areas for which she has a hat.

Members' Reasons for Coming to Canberra

Helen Cotter

I came to Canberra with my husband so he could pursue his studies. The back-story is that my husband always wanted to go to University but wasn't successful at the end of his schooling in NSW (Sydney). He became a primary school teacher – but still wanted to go to Uni.

Nowadays it is easier to enter University as a mature age student - there are many different ways but in those days, in NSW, to have another go at Matriculation, you needed to be aged over 25 years or attend Tech for 5 nights a week. Twenty five years of age seemed a long way away. He tried the 5 nights a week but it's a difficult ask for anybody, much less a young person.

We married and moved to Western Australia to experience somewhere different. He taught in primary school while I taught in high school. He learnt that he was able to undertake 2 subjects part-time at the University of WA and if he passed well, he could continue. Which he did.

Because he was studying part time, I took up some part time study to convert my Dip Ed into a B Ed. So we were both teaching and studying. After a few years I left teaching to have a baby and I became a house mum.

My husband did well at Uni and was offered a scholarship to come and pursue his PhD at the ANU in Australian Literature - Patrick White. By this time I was pregnant with our second child, and so we moved to Canberra – in trepidation at first of moving to an inland city but then growing to love it.

The A-Z of Preventative Medicine – F

Chris Moyle

Floss teeth daily to reduce bacteria and help prevent gum disease.

Flu Vaccine

Be sure to have your flu injection every year. Don't wait for winter: autumn is the best time before the cold of winter arrives.

Flutter Valve

A Flutter valve is a small pipe-shaped device with a ball bearing in the middle, which helps remove plugs of mucous in the lungs. The patient blows into the Flutter and vibrations are set off in the lungs, which cause mucous to loosen and make it easier to cough up. Daily use is recommended for bronchiectasis patients. Usually prescribed by respiratory physician with physiotherapy sessions to learn correct technique.



From the mouths of babes, namely 6 year olds

A penny saved *is not too much*.
Better late than *pregnant*.
A miss is as good *as a Mr*.
There are none so blind *as Stevie Wonder*.
Two's company, three's *the Musketeers*.

It's always darkest before *Daylight Saving Time*.
Never underestimate *the power of termites*.
Children should be seen and *not spanked or grounded*.
When the blind lead the blind *get out of the way*.
You can't teach an old dog new maths.
No news is *impossible*.

The A – Z of Lung Disease - B

Helen Reynolds

Bronchiectasis

Bronchiectasis is a condition in which the lungs' airways are abnormally stretched and widened. This stretching and widening is caused by mucus blockage. More and more mucus builds up in the airways, allowing bacteria to grow. The blockage and accompanying infection cause inflammation, leading to the weakening and widening of the passages. The weakened passages can become scarred and deformed, allowing more mucus and bacteria to build up. Bronchiectasis is characterised by repeated episodes of acute bronchial infection with increased coughing and mucus (sputum) production. This alternates with periods of chronic infection and mild coughing. Each lung infection can damage your airways. Gradually, your airways lose their ability to move air in and out. This can mean your organs won't get enough oxygen to function properly.

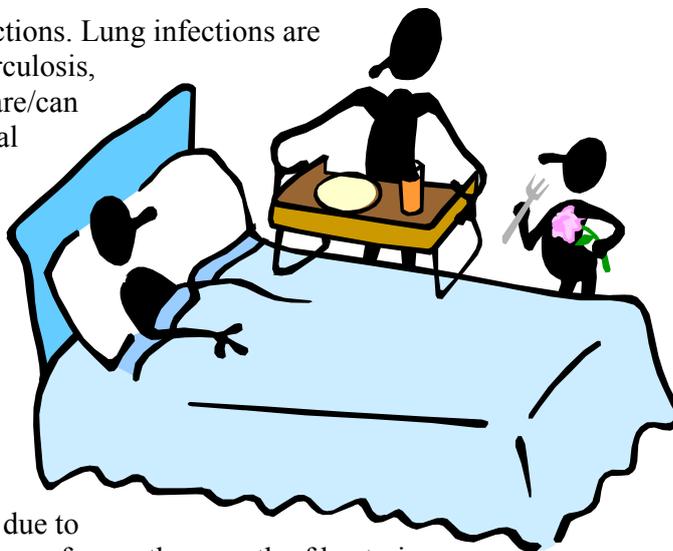
Bronchiectasis can develop at any age. It begins most often in childhood, but symptoms may not appear until much later. Bronchiectasis can occur as part of a birth defect or as a result of injury or other diseases, like tuberculosis, pneumonia and influenza. It also can be caused by a blockage in your airways due to a growth or something you inhaled as a child such as a piece of a toy or peanut. Bronchiectasis cannot be cured but with proper treatment most people with bronchiectasis can live a normal life.

The main treatments for bronchiectasis include:

1. Airway clearance techniques to loosen and clear sputum and
2. Prevention of further infections by vaccinating against infectious diseases, removing irritants and using aerosols and antibiotics when indicated.

Bacterial Lung Infection

Infections caused by bacteria are called bacterial infections. Lung infections are often of this type. Several lung diseases, such as tuberculosis, bacterial pneumonia, chronic bronchitis and asthma, are/can be caused by bacteria. One of the FAQs about bacterial infections is 'Are they contagious?' The answer is, it depends on the type of infection that affects you. Bacterial lung infection can cause severe health concerns if not treated early. A chronic lung infection is certainly one of the most dangerous ailments as it gradually reduces the vital capacity of our lungs to take in oxygen.



There are several possible modes of bacterial entry into our body, primary of which is through air, i.e., our breath. Sometimes bacterial infections are caused due to pollution or contamination of foods or drinks. Moist areas favour the growth of bacteria.

Depending on an individual's immunity towards bacterial invasion, the body responds to bacterial infection. Inhaling pollutants, toxic gases, dust and other harmful substances weakens the lung capacity, makes our immune system weaker and hence, makes us susceptible to the onslaught of pathogens. Bacterial lung infections are usually manifested through symptoms such as cough, chest pain, sore throat, fever, etc.

Bacterial Pneumonia

Pneumonia is the medical term for lung inflammation, particularly affecting the alveoli. It can occur due to several different reasons, one of which is bacterial infection in the lungs. Bacterial pneumonia is caused due to the *Streptococcus pneumoniae* bacteria. The primary symptoms are cough and fever accompanied by shaking chills, fatigue, shortness of breath and chest pain. In elders, pneumonia can also cause confusion.

Bronchitis - Acute

Although acute bronchitis is usually caused by viruses, bacteria such as *Mycoplasma pneumoniae*, *Chlamydomphila pneumoniae* and *Bordetella pertussis* contribute to about 10% of cases. It is an inflammatory condition concerning the bronchi. Symptoms include cough, which is often productive.

Prevention and precautions against lung infection

Lung infections, especially those of the bacterial kind, must be given adequate medical attention. This is essential because lung infections advance faster in their subsequent stages, which are often more difficult to treat. Hence, an early medical intervention is necessary. Antibiotics are prescribed to people suffering from lung infections. However, an expert medical practitioner must be consulted before taking antibiotics, as some people may be allergic to some medications and the doctor knows better than anyone else as to which type of antibiotic should be used in a particular situation. Symptoms like persistent, wheezing cough or oddly coloured sputum must not be mistaken for a common cold or fever and neglected.

Maintaining personal hygiene is essential in avoiding the spread of bacterial infection in the lungs. A person suffering from bacterial infection must also ensure that his/her meals are as per the prescribed diet. A poor diet may nullify, or even oppose, the effects of the treatment. As bacterial infection in the lungs is majorly caused due to inhaling polluted air, it's advisable to use nose filters while travelling. Treating bacterial infection in the lungs requires a holistic approach, taking into consideration all the facets of the disease.

Sources: *Better Living with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease* - The Australian Lung Foundation
<http://www.buzzle.com/articles/lung-diseases-list.html>
<http://www.lung.org/lung-disease/bronchiectasis/>
<http://www.buzzle.com/articles/bacterial-lung-infection.html>
<http://www.lung.org/lung-disease/bronchiectasis/understanding-bronchiectasis.html>
<http://www.medterms.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=2373>

Northside Coffee Morning

Helen Cotter

Twelve people came to the Lido at the Belconnen Mall from both Northside and Southside. We “coffeed” and talked until lunch time. It was an excellent opportunity to socialise away from a meeting format. If anyone from Northside or Southside would like to be included in other coffee mornings, please let me know.



North and South get together

Commonly asked questions relating to the use of oxygen

Helen Reynolds

- Q Can I become physically addicted to oxygen?
A No. Oxygen does not have any chemically addictive properties.
Q Will my lungs get weaker if I use oxygen?
A No. Oxygen therapy does not weaken the lungs.

With the help of Lung Life Australia more to be included in next month's issue.

Handbag style POC available

We have an **AirSep Focus portable oxygen concentrator** available. This is one of those handbag style concentrators – over the shoulder or around the waist. It operates up to the equivalence of 2 litres per minute. This POC has two batteries and all the necessary cords. It is only a few years old as the owner had to move to a stronger POC.

Contact Helen Cotter at lung.life1@hotmail.com or phone 02 6281 2988



Mick's Bag

These fit so well they should be in a dictionary.

Adult: A person who has stopped growing at both ends and is now growing in the middle.

Beauty Parlour: A place where women curl up and dye.

Cannibal: Someone who is fed up with people.

Chickens: the only animal you eat before they are born and after they are dead.

Committee: A body that keeps minutes and wastes hours.

Dust: Mud with the juice squeezed out.

Egotist: Someone who is usually me-deep in conversation.

Handkerchief: Cold storage.

Mosquito: An insect that makes you like flies better.

Raisin: Grape with sunburn.

Secret: Something you tell to one person at a time.

Toothache: The pain that drives you to extraction.

Tomorrow: One of the greatest labour saving devices of today.

Wrinkles: Something other people have, similar to my character lines.

For Sale

1. INOGEN 1 Generation 2 No.1011 6805 purchased on 17 April 2010 for \$ 5995
2. Complete with Battery No. SN 101 10 393 and
3. Spare Battery No. SN 101 101 198 for an extra \$ 500
4. Charger and Cable 09380009121
5. In Car Charging Cable
6. Trolley and Shoulder Carrying Strap
7. The batteries have been regularly exchanged every month as prescribed and services have been carried out.

The concentrator has been used only occasionally and is in excellent condition. Inspections and offers are welcome and any offers are negotiable. The concentrator and accompaniments may be inspected by arrangement at 14 Rapanea St. Rivett. Tel. 0413220181

I also offer for sale a PRIDE PATHRIDER four wheel electric mobility scooter, which is in as new condition as Gerda only used it twice for a short distance. This scooter was purchased from the scooter shop in Fisher ACT and cost \$ 1600.

Any offers will be considered.

It is available for inspection at 14 Rapanea Street Rivett. Tel. 0413220181