



November 2016 Newsletter

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

Editor: Helen Reynolds 02 6259 7737
helenrey@creationcorporation.com.au

Coordinator: Lyn Morley 02 6291 0626
lung.life1@hotmail.com

Meeting Coordinator: Chris Moyle 02 6288 8463
chris_m_moyle@hotmail.com

Next Meeting: Thursday 10 November 2016
10:15 am - 12 noon
Weston Creek Labor Club
Teesdale Close
Stirling ACT 2611

November's Meeting is the last for the year. We'll continue to look at our chronic conditions and how we treat them; and we'll wrap up the year.

Dates for your diary

Wednesday 16 November 2016	World COPD Day – Lung Life stall at the Canberra Hospital
Thursday 8 December 2016	Christmas Lunch, Weston Creek Labor Club, Stirling
Thursday 12 January 2017	Lung Life meeting – first for 2017
Thursday 23 March 2017	Seniors Expo at Exhibition Park

New Co-ordinator

We welcome **Lyn Morley** as the new co-ordinator of the Lung Life Support Group. Lyn is a new member of the group but has been ably co-chairing our meetings for the last two months. We're very pleased she has agreed to take on the role of co-ordinator and believe that she'll make a great success of it. We wish her well.

October Meeting

Lyn and Chris chaired the meeting of about 25 people. We discussed the following items:

- This year's World COPD Day on Wednesday 16 November 2016. A space is booked at the Canberra Hospital for our display and testing of people's lung capacity by a lung care nurse. We need volunteers wearing our green t shirts to operate the stall; if you need a t shirt, ask Esther.

- Nineteen people braved the cool (cold?) conditions to enjoy a fish and chips luncheon at the Southern Cross Yacht Club in September. The rain luckily held off and all had a lovely time.
- We've organised our Christmas lunch at the Weston Creek Labor Club, Stirling for Thursday 8 December 2016, our usual meeting day. See later in the newsletter for details
- Helen Cotter reported on the CPAG state and territory wide teleconference organised through the Lung Foundation (LFA). Lung Foundation is organising an on-line patient forum to connect people with various lung conditions to chat about their conditions. It should be up and running in March 2017.

Christmas Hamper

For the next meeting, please bring along a donation for the Christmas hampers; items such as non-perishable foods/drinks etc are most welcome. Pam will collect them.

The LFA is busy with its patient seminars (Education Day); fund raising for research into lung disease including Corporate Challenges, Balls, Gala Dinners etc - mainly in Sydney and Melbourne.

We discussed oxygen provision in various states/territories – it varies amongst them all. Helen talked about the oxygen trial for the provision of POCs that is beginning in the ACT.

One member reminded us about the **shingles vaccine** which is available **free** for people aged between 70 and 79.

After the business side of the meeting, we played a couple of fun games of Housie and enjoyed a small raffle. Ebba, Jan, Kaye and Carmel were the lucky prize winners. We made \$120 which will help towards the Christmas lunch.

We finished the meeting with a short discussion of some natural remedies that people use to assist with their ailments. None were mentioned that aid lung conditions but some were mentioned for arthritis and cold sores. We also briefly discussed treatment for bronchiectasis.

Natural remedies for arthritis

Lyn Brooks takes the following supplements daily in divided doses for arthritis. They ease joint pain and Lyn finds that if she stops taking them the pain returns. These supplements may not help everyone who has arthritis, and it may be advisable to introduce them gradually in case of any side effects.

- Glucosamine, Chondroitin and MSM 1500mg 2 x day
- Omega-3 Fish Oil 2000mg 3 x day
- Curcumin 90mg 2 x day

Glucosamine and **Chondroitin** are widely recommended for arthritis. They are part of normal cartilage which acts as a cushion between the bones in a joint.

- **MSM** – methylsulfonylmethane – provides sulphur which helps joint pain.
- **Fish Oil** is recommended by some doctors for various ailments including asthma and possibly other lung conditions. Look at the label to choose a clean brand free of mercury and other pollutants.
- **Curcumin**, a member of the ginger family, is found in turmeric, a spice often used in curries. It may reduce swelling and help ease pain and inflammation.

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The Choice organisation reviewed the medical research into glucosamine/chondroitin in 2014. They found that research results are inconsistent but that many users swear by it. They also point out that it is dangerous for some people: especially those with fish allergy, diabetes or using blood thinning medicine. www.choice.com.au/health-and-body .

Natural remedies for cold sores

Cold sores occur when the herpes simplex virus (HSV-1) is activated causing sores to occur, usually around the lips. Once HSV-1 has entered the body it never leaves, but remains latent in the central nervous system until triggered by stress, fever or infections.

Avoid close contact with others to prevent spreading the infection. It is important not to kiss newborn babies if you have active cold sores as the virus can cause a severe disease called neonatal herpes simplex.

Chris Moyle always takes 6 grams of L-lysine, an amino acid, at the first sign of a cold sore. She swallows the 1 gram tablets after a meal, then has another 4 grams at the next meal, continuing with a smaller dose the following day. A powder form is also available.

The cold sore can often be prevented from coming up, or else it comes up for only a short time. It never lasts a fortnight or more, which would happen without treatment.

Wikipedia says evidence does not support L-lysine as a cold sore preventative, but Chris finds this remedy works, as long as it's taken in large doses at the first tingling sign of a cold sore and continued at fairly high doses for another day or two until it disappears. She has never experienced any side effects from taking it.

Reference: Wikipedia: - fish oil – cold sores

Bronchiectasis

Bronchiectasis occurs when the bronchi tubes widen, get floppy, become more easily infected and inflamed and create a lot of mucus. Treatment involves:

- Use of puffers such as Seretide and the latest one, Breo Ellipta
- Use of antibiotics such as Keflex and anti-inflammatory drugs
- Use of devices such as FLUTTER which provide resistance to breathing and help the lungs work harder to break up the mucus. A variety of devices exist with costs ranging from about \$30 to over \$100. Using a straw and blowing into water has the same effect.
- Use of postural drainage to help bring up the mucus

We hope to continue talking about our conditions, symptoms and treatments in later meetings.

Lung Life Christmas Lunch

**Thursday 8 December
Weston Creek Labor Club**

Cost:\$30

Time: 12 for 12.30

Last event for Lung Life for 2016

If you wish to come and haven't put your name on the list or won't be at the next meeting, contact Pam Harris

Email: bajh@live.com or phone; 6288 2053

November: Lung Health Awareness Month

From Lung Foundation Australia: www.lungfoundation.com.au

During November we celebrate the importance of breathing and encourage everyone to stop and think about what they can do with just one breath. Lung disease doesn't discriminate – it affects the young, old, male, female, smokers, former-smokers and never smokers.



At least one in ten Australians has some form of lung disease however Lung Foundation Australia estimates the number to be significantly higher. Yet recent research by Lung Foundation Australia found more than half of all Australian adults rarely or never think about the health of their lungs. Indeed three out of five Australian adults studied reported symptoms or risk factors that put them at risk of possible lung disease.

During November, we make a special effort to remind everyone about the importance of good lung health. We make an extra special effort on Wednesday November 16, World COPD Day.

World COPD Day

From: *Global Initiative for chronic obstructive lung disease:*

www.goldcopd.org/world-copd-day

World COPD Day is organised by the Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD) together with health professionals and patient groups around the world. Its aim is to raise awareness about COPD and improve COPD care throughout the world.



Each year, GOLD chooses a theme and co-ordinates preparation and distribution of world wide materials and resources. Activities are organised in each country by professionals, educators and members of the public. The 2016 theme for World COPD Day on Wednesday November 16 is **“Breathe in the Knowledge”**.

The first World COPD Day was held in 2002. Each year organisers in more than 50 countries have carried out activities. In Australia, Lung Foundation Australia co-ordinates World COPD Day, organising activities and disseminating information, encouraging health professionals, pharmacies, support groups and other organisations to promote lung health on World COPD Day.

The Canberra Lung Life Support Group is playing its part and holding one awareness activity among the many in the ACT, in Australia and around the world.

World COPD Day

Wednesday 16 November

The Canberra Lung Life Support Group will be having a stand in the Foyer of the Canberra Hospital from 10am to 3pm

We will be promoting lung awareness and providing lung function tests for interested passers-by.
Look for the green t shirts.

MYCOPLASMA PNEUMONIA

Lyn Brooks

At the 2015 Lung Foundation Education Day, Dr Mark Hurwitz stated that the second most common cause of COPD (after smoking) was Mycoplasma Pneumonia. Mycoplasma Pneumonia (MP) was originally thought to be a virus but has been shown to be a bacterium. It lacks a cell wall and possesses selective affinity for the epithelial cells that line the respiratory system. It has the potential to produce hydrogen peroxide, which is responsible for damaging the cells.

Unfortunately, MP can be difficult to diagnose, especially in the early stages because the body does not instantly reveal an infection and a blood test for confirming antibodies can return a false negative result. Also, physical examination may not always be able to tell MP apart from bronchitis or other respiratory infections. Diagnosis is usually on the basis of typical symptoms and/or chest x-ray.

Symptoms include: shortness of breath; prolonged paroxysmal cough; excess perspiration; enlarged lymph nodes; inflammation of the eardrum; increased weakness/fatigue; chest discomfort/congestion; muscle aches/stiffness. The symptoms may be mild to severe, depending upon the overall health of the individual. It may take several months for recovery.

Mycoplasma infections can be asymptomatic and lie dormant until re-activated. Clues to a persistent mycoplasma infection include an elevation in inflammatory markers like C-reactive protein, low white cell count, elevated rheumatoid factor.

Patients with more than one mycoplasma species generally have a longer history of illness. Chronic infections may require specialized DNA testing (polymerase chain reaction).

Antibiotics used to treat MP (and other mycoplasmas) are macrolides, quinolones, or tetracyclines.

Research has shown that chronic mycoplasma infections have been implicated in:

- Rheumatoid Arthritis and Psoriatic Arthritis
- Chronic Fatigue Syndrome
- Fibromyalgia and Polymyalgia Rheumatica
- Gulf War Syndrome
- Autoimmune diseases such as Lupus, Scleroderma, Vasculitis, Multiple Sclerosis and Sjogren's

Sources

- *Presentation at Lung Foundation Education Day, 29 April 2015 by Dr Mark Hurwitz*
- *Website: <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/mycoplasma-pneumonia-symptoms.html>*
- *Website: <http://www.drgregemerson.com/fact-file/mycoplasma>*
- *Article on Mycoplasmas by J B Baseman, The University of Texas Health Science Centre at San Antonio and J G Tully, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, <http://www.rheumatic.org/mycoplas.htm>*

The A-Z of Preventative Health

Pursed lip breathing and diaphragmatic or abdominal breathing help strengthen respiratory muscles (especially the diaphragm) and help rid the lungs of stale, trapped air. One of the primary reasons people with lung disease feel short of breath and can't seem to get enough air in, is because they don't get the old air out. Fresh air can't come in if the lungs are already filled with stale air. These breathing exercises can help you more fully empty your lungs and take advantage of your full lung capacity.

