



April 2019 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 11 April 2019
10:15 am - 12 noon
Weston Creek Labor Club
Teesdale Close
Stirling ACT 2611

During the meeting we will allocate time to discuss future plans, followed by time for Jo Glasson to entertain us with some merry tunes on her flute.

Dates for your diary

Thursday 28 March 2019	9:30 am - 11:30 am UC Physiotherapy Students
Wednesday 3 April 2019	1:30 pm - 3:30 pm UC Physiotherapy Students
Friday 5 April 2019	Education Day Seminar, Southern Cross Club, Woden
Thursday 11 April 2019	CLLSG Meeting
Wednesday 1 May 2019	Fish n Chips, Southern Cross Yacht Club, Yarralumla

March Meeting

Helen Cotter and Chris Moyle

About 25 people attended today's meeting.

- Lyn reminded us of the Seniors' Expo where we are setting up a stand and she encouraged us to go and have a look (report later in the newsletter).
- She also reminded us about the upcoming visits to the Physio students at UC on 28 March 2019 and 3 April 2019.
- Canberra Seminar Day on Friday 5 April 2019 (see details later).
- Last month a few of us attended the launch of the Strategic Action Plan for Lung Conditions at Parliament House - which was written up in our last newsletter. We discussed the plan and the

Government's response.

- Last year was the 20th Anniversary of the Canberra Lung Life Support Group 1998 - 2019. That is quite an achievement. We decided to celebrate the event albeit 12 months late and will discuss what we want to do at the next meeting.
- We organised a Fish'n Chips lunch at Snapper and the Yacht Club for Wednesday 1 May 2019.

Then it was over to our speakers. . . Simon and Arthur.

LUNGS IN ACTION CLASSES AT CIT BRUCE

Simon and Arthur



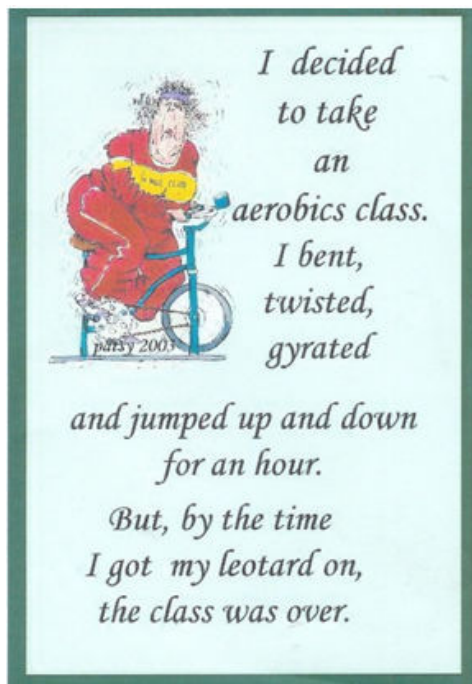
Our speakers, Simon and Arthur, come from **CIT Fit and Well** at the Bruce Campus of the CIT. Simon is the Fit and Well Manager and Arthur runs the Lungs in Action classes. They offer exercise sessions in their gym that are tailored to the needs of individual. Arthur can assess you and advise which class is most appropriate for you.

They have classes for:

- Heart health
- Osteocise - to improve strength and bone density
- Functional mobility such as balance, postural work and stretching
- Yoga
- Lungs in Action.

There are unfortunately no classes on the Southside but Simon and Arthur are looking into this.

As many of us come from Southside, we hope that this will happen soon.



Lungs in Action Classes

Classes are limited to 8 - 10 people. The program is designed to maintain or improve each participant's physical condition. It has low intensity cardio exercises and exercises aimed at elevating breathing while keeping it at maintainable levels. The class has a qualified trainer assisted by fitness students from the CIT.

Most participants go through the 6 - 8 week Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program, run by the Physiotherapists at the Canberra Hospital but it is not necessary to do this. If you have a medical condition, you need to get a doctor's certificate but, if not, you can just phone up and join. You can bring your own oxygen to help you exercise.

Classes are also open to others such as those who have had a stroke or heart failure or have chronic mobility issues such as Parkinsons. Even if you're really struggling with breathing, some exercise is better than none. You work on what you can do.

There is an important social side as well. Members of the classes often develop a connection, aided by a coffee cart now situated near the gym.

It's a good idea to exercise as it helps maintain your condition - and maybe improve it. Simon and Arthur have found that, when students begin, some will need to stop a few times on their walk from the car park to the gym - but gradually, they find that they are no longer stopping so frequently.

As Pamela, a Lungs in Action participant says: "Go. You won't regret it. It helps so much to your wellbeing and it's great socially because people who attend all share similar problems and feel they are not alone".

Have a Massage

You can also get a massage at \$35 for an hour's treatment from the Fitness and Massage students.

Having a massage helps the students build up their expertise.

The first visit to Lungs in Action is free but after that, it's \$6 for each visit or cheaper if you buy 10 passes or take out a membership. If you join the HEAL Program there are further discounts. It's open 7 days a week: Monday to Friday 6:00 am - 8:00 pm; Saturday and Sunday 8:00 am - 5:00 pm.

If you want to follow up on this information, contact **Fit and Well** on 02 6207 4309 or look up their website: www.cit.edu.au/fitandwell to find the following documents:

- CIT Fit & Well Timetable (PDF 1 Mb)
- Membership Form (PDF 286Kb)
- Pre-Screening Form (PDF 415Kb)
- CIT Fit & Well - (PDF 157Kb)

Seniors' Expo

Helen Reynolds

Inside Exhibition Park parking was difficult if not impossible to find while inside the venue, people, some of them weighed down with sample bags, were everywhere. The people were entertained by a wide range of activities such as a Folk Dancing, Chair Yoga, Tai Chi, Seasoned Voices Choir as well as more than 120 exhibitors covering travel and leisure, health and social services. Everything you need to know about everything.

In his welcome Gordon Ramsay MLA, Minister for Seniors and Veterans wrote: "This week's celebrations include activities and events that highlight the diverse life experiences, wisdom and resources that older people possess, to the benefit of our entire community.

It is vital, as a growing city, that we foster and value the contributions of our older citizens and celebrate the pivotal role they play in the community." And so say all of us!!!



Shirley, Esther, Lyn and Pam looking very professional in their green T-shirts are ready, willing and able to educate passer byes on things pertaining to their lungs.

"yet another age-related condition!"

Helen Reynolds

What is age-related macular degeneration?

Age-related macular degeneration is a degenerative eye condition caused by changes at the back of the eye (retina). In Australia age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the leading cause of severe vision impairment in people aged over 60 years. The older we are the greater our risk of developing AMD. Around one in every 200 people has AMD at 60. However, by the age of 90 it affects one person in five. We are all living longer so the number of people affected is increasing.

AMD affects central vision which may become blurry or distorted and gaps or dark spots may appear. As AMD progresses, the ability to see clearly will change. However, it's important to remember that no matter how advanced your macular degeneration is, you will not lose all your sight as there is always some peripheral vision remaining.

What are the types of AMD?

AMD is described as either dry or wet. Dry AMD is a gradual deterioration of the macular as the retinal cells die off and are not renewed. There is currently no treatment for dry AMD. The progression of dry AMD varies but in most people it develops over many months or years. Often people carry on as normal for some time.

Wet macular degeneration develops when abnormal blood vessels grow into the macular. These leak blood or fluid which leads to scarring of the macular and rapid loss of central vision. Wet AMD can develop very suddenly. It can now be treated if caught quickly. Around 10 to 15 per cent of people with dry AMD develop wet AMD so if you have been diagnosed with the dry form of the disease and notice a sudden change in your vision, **contact your optometrist or hospital eye specialist urgently**. If you have AMD in one eye, the other eye may be affected within a few years.

What are the common symptoms?

Macular degeneration affects people in different ways. Symptoms may develop slowly if you have dry AMD, especially if it's only in one eye. However, as the condition progresses, your ability to see clearly will change.

- ◆ A gradual or sudden decline in the ability to see objects clearly
- ◆ Gaps or dark spots (like a smudge on glasses) may appear in your vision, especially first thing in the morning



Straight lines such as door frames and lampposts may appear distorted or bent.

This distortion can be checked using an Amsler grid or against everyday household grids such as bathroom tiles or a window frame.

- ◆ Difficulty reading that is not improved with new glasses
- ◆ Distorted vision in the central field and difficulty seeing people's faces clearly
- ◆ Dimming of colour vision.

Who is at risk?

Those most at risk of developing AMD are people with a family history of AMD, people over the age of 75 and smokers.

Can AMD be treated?

Treatments are available for wet AMD if caught early. Drugs are injected into the eye to stop the growth of the abnormal blood vessels. Following diagnosis people will usually have a loading dose once a month for three months. The patient will then be assessed to see if more are required and when. Dry AMD treatments are not yet readily available to the general public.

Intravitreal injections for retinal disease are commonly performed by Ophthalmologists. The most common conditions treated are age-related macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy and retinal vein occlusions. The procedure is performed in clinic or a day surgery facility and is associated with minimal to no discomfort after the application of a topical anaesthetic. A small amount of medication is injected into the vitreous cavity. Most patients have minimal to no discomfort during the procedure or afterwards. Injections are given monthly until the condition settles down and then the time between injections is increased.

A healthy diet rich in antioxidants and regular exercise is important in reducing the risk of macular degeneration and in slowing the progression of the condition. Antioxidants are found in a wide variety of vitamins and minerals such as Omega-3 (salmon, mackerel, trout and sardines), Vitamin C (citrus, fruits, berries, kiwi, tomatoes and capsicum), Lutein and Zeaxanthin (dark leafy vegetables like spinach and kale, broccoli, silver beet, pumpkin, peas, corn and beans), Zinc (seafood), Vitamin E (nuts and seeds) and Selenium (Brazil nuts, mushrooms, oats and brown rice).

Your eye specialist can show you how to monitor your vision with an Amsler Grid (see next page). It is very important to contact your eye specialist if any changes in vision are noticed on the Amsler Grid. Your specialist will see you very quickly for potentially sight saving treatment.

Sources: Fact Sheet Vision Australia
visionaustralia.org/information/eye-conditions/Aged-Related-Macular-Degeneration
 Fact Sheet Macular Society:
www.macularsociety.org/what-age-related-macular-degeneration
 Blink Fact Sheet, Ophthalmologist: "*Blink Intravitreal Injection Information*"

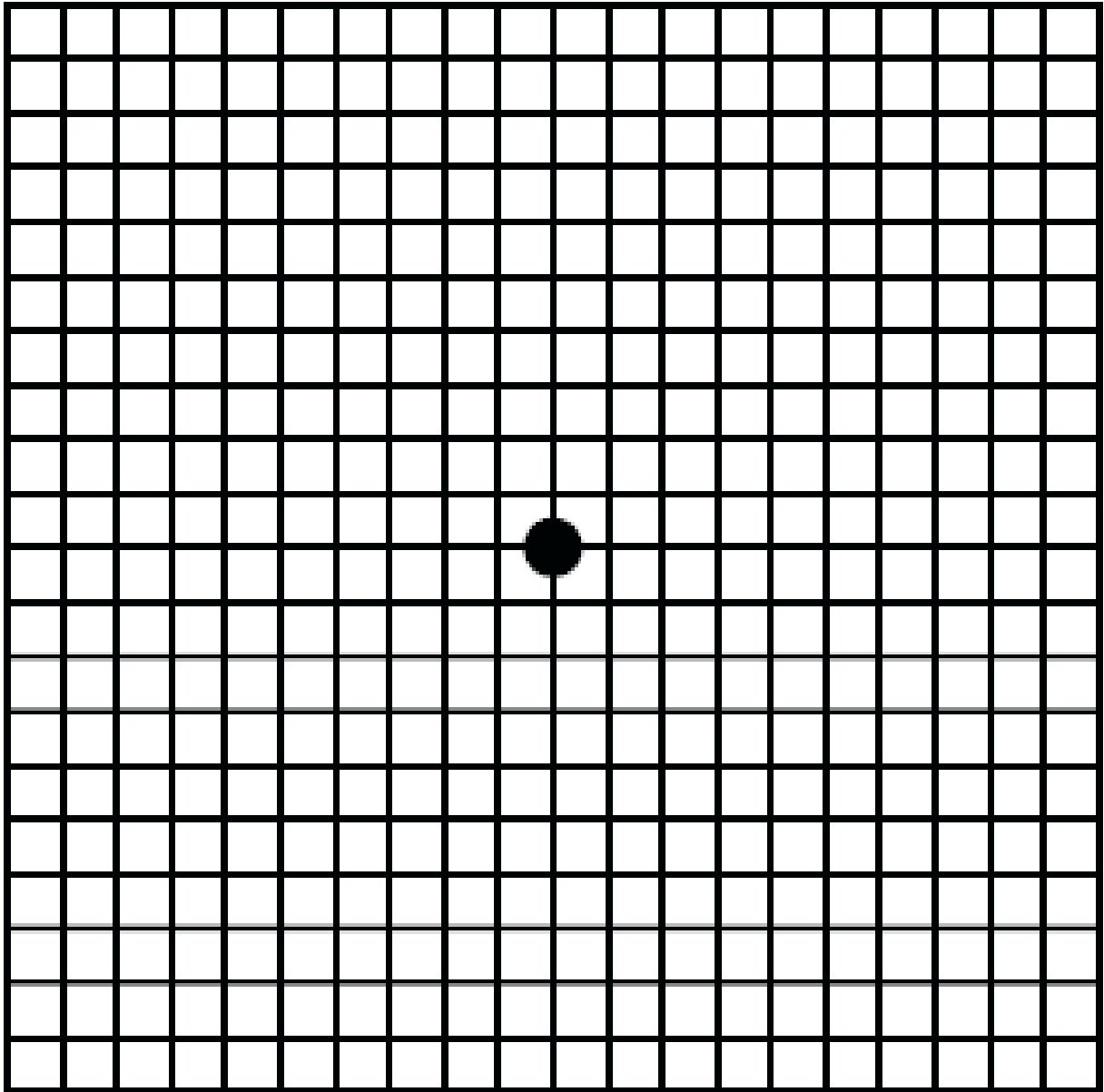
IntraVitreAl injection

Sounds rather scary I know, but it really isn't that bad.

The eye is cleaned and anaesthetised and a sticker is stuck near the appropriate eye to indicate which eye is to be treated.

My ophthalmologist stands to my side almost out of sight and it is all over before I realise he is about to push a great big, but very thin needle into my eye. And it really doesn't hurt, much.

Amsler Grid



Use this Amsler grid to check your vision every day.

How to use:

- ◆ *Wear the eyeglasses you normally wear when reading.*
- ◆ *Position the chart 30 cm away from your face.*
- ◆ *Cover one eye at a time with your hand.*
- ◆ *Stare at the dot in the centre. Do not let your eye drift from the centre dot.*
- ◆ *Contact your eye care doctor immediately if any of the straight lines appear wavy or bent, any of the boxes differ in size or shape from the others, or any of the lines are missing, blurry or discoloured.*

Monitoring your vision every day is important. Print out this grid and keep it in a convenient place.

National Lung Health Consumer Seminar

Canberra, ACT



Lung
Foundation
Australia

Date Friday, 5 April, 2019

Time 10.00am - 2.00pm

Location Southern Cross Club,
92-96 Corinna street,
Woden 2606

Cost \$20 (includes morning tea
and lunch)

20% discount for Love
Your Lungs Club members.

RSVP Thursday, 28 March, 2019
To register please visit
shop.lungfoundation.com.au or phone freecall
1800 654 301.

Parking Available free onsite

Notes

The room is air-conditioned and may be cool, so please bring a jacket.

You may wish to bring a pen and paper to take notes.

PROGRAM

9.45am Registrations and morning tea.

10.15am Welcome from Lung Foundation Australia.

10.30am **Inhaler device, medicines and interactions:** Pharmacists Rati Venkatesh and Samantha Kourtis will explain the importance of following instructions when using your medicines and inhalers. They will discuss the use of over the counter medicines and the possible effects when using them with your prescribed medicines. They will also talk about how food and drink can interact with your prescribed medicines and change how it works in your body.

11.15am Tradestand time.

11.30am **Oxygen:** Dr Mark Hurwitz, Clinical Associate Professor of the Australian National University Medical School will present oxygen therapy and how and why it is used for people living with a lung disease.

12.15pm Lunch.

1.00pm **Palliative care and advanced care planning:** Rachel Simek, Palliative care Educator, and Emma Awizen, Team Leader of Advance Care planning will dispel myths about palliative care, discuss working with your doctors in your future healthcare decisions and communicating these decisions to your loved ones.

1.45pm Thankyou and close.

2.00pm End of Seminar.

