

August 2022 Newsletter

Our mission is to provide a supportive and informative environment for people with lung conditions and their carers.

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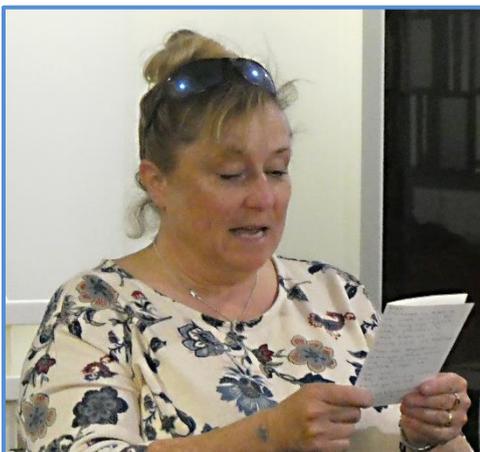
Coordinator: Marina Siemionow 042 962 9180
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NEXT MEETING: Thursday 8 September 2022
10:15 am - 12 noon
Weston Creek Labor Club
Teesdale Close, Stirling ACT 2611

The guest speaker: Erica Roughton, a Dietician from Arthritis ACT

Esther's Gift - Lunch at the Burns Club for her colleagues at the Lung Life Support group - Val Siemionow

The lunch at the Burns Club on Friday 29 July 2022 was very well attended. Everyone wore some blue on their clothing - Esther's favourite colour. We were pleased to welcome Esther's daughter, Kylie, who made a brief speech in which she remembered her mother and thanked everyone for coming along.



Esther's daughter
Kylie - left

Members,
Shirley and
Laurelle –
right



We saw a number of members who have not been able to attend regular meetings for a while, and it was good that they could make it.

The lunch itself proved to be a very enjoyable social gathering and everyone appeared to have a good time. Esther will be missed by all.



Val (top right), George (bottom right), Marina and Esther's granddaughter Abbey (top left), Marilyn and Stephen (centre left), and our group (bottom left).



From the Editor

Thanks to Val for his report and for being the photographer on the day.

...and welcome back to George from his travels to outback Queensland.

August meeting – Helen Cotter

Numbers were down a bit for this meeting – 16 people. Maybe the worry about COVID or the flu is taking its toll. It was a good meeting.

- Marina handed out a personal information form for us to fill in - to enable contact if need be.
- Lunch is organised for 25 August at the Raiders Club Weston.
- Marina talked about the program *Take Control - Live Well*, handing out forms with more detail. This three week program aims to build the skills and confidence in dealing with your chronic condition. You may either attend the sessions or do them online. The sessions are held at various times in Tuggeranong, Woden and Belconnen. To register or find out more details, call 02 5124 9977 or email selfmanagement@act.gov.au.
- Remember the Seniors Expo is on Wednesday 14 September at Epic. It'd be lovely if you came to help or to visit the expo.

Then it was on to our speakers.

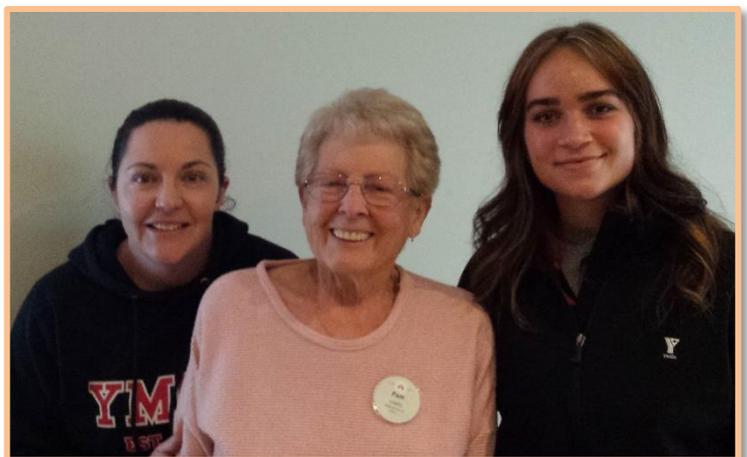


The benefits of exercise

Tegan, the Operations Manager and Eiland, the Exercise Physiologist from Chifley YMCA Gym (pictured with Pam) spoke to us about the health benefits of exercise.

Eiland talked about common lung conditions such as COPD and Asthma, explaining the limitations of the conditions – poor airflow; abnormal inflammatory response, chest tightening, narrowing of bronchial passages, and progressive aspects of the conditions.

COPD has an irreversible airflow limitation – but there's also an inflammatory response which gives continuous bronchial irritation and increased enzyme activity that affects the whole body.



These problems have **spill over effects**:

- this means that the whole body is affected, and this can ignite a long list of disorders such as cancer and heart disease.
- muscles can waste away as exercise capacity is reduced and often fails to return to normal.
- and this can lead to muscles getting weaker which in turn leads to poor health.

How does exercise help?

- Exercise helps to slow down the progression of the condition.
- It increases blood circulation, helping the heart send blood around the body.
- It strengthens the respiratory muscles enabling better breathing.
- It helps to better manage your symptoms.
- It helps to better manage other comorbidities and the spill over effect.
- It gives you improved endurance and strength.
- It gives you improved health related quality of life.

How often should you exercise?

Studies have shown that three times a week produces the best results. The length of these sessions needs to be tailored to suit your situation – but somewhere between 20 – 45 minutes each session is a good length.

You should be exercising so that you have moderate shortness of breath, increasing to moderately severe – but building up gradually.

What kind of exercise?

There are three main types – you need to try to do all three:

- Resistance training – with weights – which helps the muscles
- Aerobic training – to improve circulation
- Respiratory muscle training – to improve the function of the respiratory muscles

Conclusion

Exercise is so beneficial to your lung condition as well as your general health. All exercise can be done at an individual level – you do what you are able to do, and some is better than none.

You may be able to get some gym sessions through a care plan.

A care plan is a management plan of a chronic condition. The plan lasts for 12 months. It's organised with your doctor and you, setting goals and targets for you, including free visits to allied health.

Care plans are completely bulk-billed if you hold a current Medicare card.

Some health funds give a rebate for exercise programs.

LFA Bronchiectasis and COPD Webinar (23 May 2022) - Chris Moyle

Tara Rahmanian (LFA) introduced herself along with four lung patients who answered questions about their illnesses.

Kylie and **Denise** have bronchiectasis and sinusitis, and Denise also has asthma. **Clayton** and **Ken** have emphysema (COPD).

Q. 1 What is your best tip for dealing with your lung disease?

Kylie and **Denise**: 'Lung clearance and exercise.' Kylie added 'Be patient and kind to yourself. Rest if you need to.'

Clayton and **Ken**: 'Exercise.' Ken added 'Meditate and exercise daily. Do a Pulmonary Rehabilitation course.'

Q. 2 How do you get others around you to understand your condition?

Clayton: ‘It’s difficult as people see that you look well, and they haven’t had the problem themselves. They’ll begin to understand when they see you suffering with a breathing problem.’

Q. 3 How do you manage breathlessness and/or excessive mucous build-up?

Kylie: ‘I never go anywhere without tissues and have a big cough before meeting people. I have learned not to be frightened of my breathlessness. I tell myself that I am still breathing, and it is OK. The fear can stop us doing what we need to do. Stay calm and wait until you recover, then continue.’

Q. 4 How do you manage the impacts of weather on your lung health?

Denise: ‘I am affected by the burn-off season, pollen and wood-fire smoke and so I need to keep up to date with burn-offs and pollen count forecasts. I always have my Ventolin puffer on hand.’

Clayton: ‘Learn what affects you and prepare yourself.’

Kylie: ‘I am affected by cold air and wear a scarf or mask over my nose and mouth to protect my lungs.’

Q. 5 What are your experiences with exercise and has it helped manage your symptoms?

Ken: ‘Activity is vital.’

Kylie: ‘I’ve learnt to be creative with exercise and do whatever works - sometimes singing. Even small amounts of exercise count.’

Q. 6 How do you take care of your mental health and well-being while living with COPD and bronchiectasis?

Clayton: ‘Mindfulness and meditation. Accept you have a lung condition and take the right steps to get you through it all. Pulmonary rehabilitation and exercise.’

Denise: ‘I was always anxious. Get assistance. There are mental health professionals who don’t understand you and there are those who do. Find the one who understands you. Take mental illness seriously. Don’t be afraid or ashamed of it.’

Q. 7 How did you manage working with a lung condition?

Kylie: ‘I left one job because the cold air-conditioned atmosphere was affecting my lungs. I was a teacher and kept catching illnesses from my pupils. Now I work part-time and have my own business, doing a lot of work on-line, and have found a better balance in my life and can manage much more easily.’

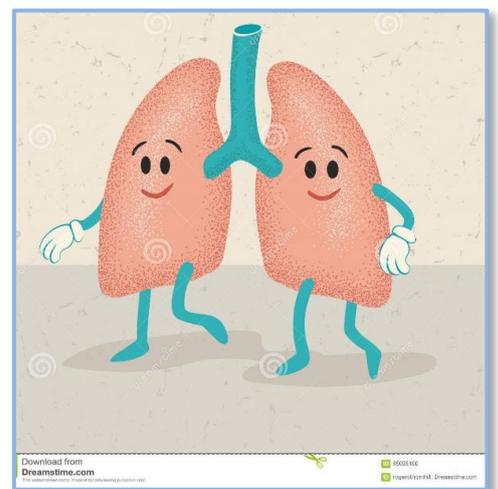
Ken: ‘Pace yourself. Work within your limitations and shut down for the day if you are not well.’

Denise: ‘We need a purpose – a reason to get up and get going each day.’

Chris Moyle: ‘I would add that it’s better to seek medical help early for exacerbations of lung disease. Eat a nutritious diet and get some exercise every day.’

‘I recently had some one hour phone conversations with one of the LFA nurses which was a very worthwhile exercise. It’s not often that someone will give the time to listen to your problems for an hour.’

‘I also had several percussion sessions (chest physio) from a physiotherapist and learnt a technique I can manage to do myself at home. It’s important, with bronchiectasis, to cough up excess phlegm from the lungs on a daily basis to prevent it settling and becoming infected.’



‘To summarise, the message is to learn to look after yourself very well, mentally, emotionally and physically, getting help in the process.’

Val Powers On – Chris Moyle

Val Dempsey has travelled around Australia advocating for first aid training since accepting her Senior Australian of the Year award. She has also had the chance to influence politicians and business leaders.

Through St John, she has launched a free online first aid driver awareness course for young people. The 72 year old recently presented to 900 mayors and councillors about first aid, encouraging them to incorporate it locally.

Val says, ‘I have yet to meet anybody who is absolutely against the idea of people learning first aid.’ And her response to the Queen’s approval: ‘I don’t believe that I could have had a higher endorsement.’

Reference: <https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/7810885/how-val-sold-the-queen-on-her-first-aid-mission-for-drivers/>

Seniors and Veterans Expo - Marina Siemionow

This year COTA is arranging a Veterans and Seniors Expo that will once again be held at Exhibition Park. The second COTA Expo for the year will be held on Wednesday 14 September, and this time there will be a special focus on Veterans. These expos are excellent avenues to attract new members to our group, so we will once again have a stall advertising what we do.

Pam Harris who is coordinating the stall for us is still looking for a few more volunteers to help out on the day. She requires help to:

1. Set up the stall in the morning.
2. Jointly operate the stall for a two-hour shift. Shifts are 10:00 am to 12:00 pm; 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm; and 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm.
3. Pack up the stall at the end of the day.

If you are able to help out, please let us know by emailing lung.life1@hotmail.com. Also, if you are visiting the Expo, we’d love to see you so please come to our stall and have a chat.

Finally a joke from Esther – something she enjoyed.

‘Romance’

An older couple were lying in bed one night. The husband was falling asleep but the wife was in a romantic mood and wanted to talk. She said: ‘You used to hold my hand when we were courting.’ Warily he reached across, held her hand for a second and tried to get back to sleep. A few moments later she said: ‘Then you used to kiss me.’

Mildly irritated, he reached across, gave her a peck on the cheek, and settled down to sleep. Thirty seconds later she said: ‘Then you used to bite my neck.’ Angrily, he threw back the bed clothes and got out of bed. ‘Where are you going?’ she asked.

‘To get my teeth!’