

July 2024 Newsletter

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

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NEXT MEETING: Thursday 8 August 2024
10:15 am – 12:00 noon
Weston Creek Labor Club
Teesdale Close, Stirling ACT 2611

The Erindale pharmacist will talk to us about knowing and managing our medications.

July meeting Helen Cotter

We welcomed a new member to the meeting by everyone introducing themselves and our various lung conditions or caring situation. After that, we spent most of the meeting having animated discussions about some issues that were strongly felt. These included:

- Discussion about **breathing projects that are currently underway**. One current research project is looking at the best ways for people to deal with their breathlessness attacks. Another is looking at ways to raise awareness of GPs in dealing with people with breathlessness. Some of these projects are international which enables a broader perspective. Marina, Kaye and Caroline are contributing participants in different projects.
- Discussion about **vaping**. We know that smoking numbers are down but that vaping is taking off, especially among young people. This is largely because vaping companies are busy encouraging us to vape – and to deny that any harm is being done. LFA has been important in encouraging the Government to bring in the recently changed laws that restrict the sale of vapes (See later).
- Discussion about the **problem of getting information out to people**. Part of this discussion centered on LFA and all the worthwhile information and assistance it has – but which many people don't know about or find hard to access from the LFA website. Later this year, we will have an LFA representative talk to us about what they have been doing - as well as showing us what the website can tell us.

After these vigorous discussions, we organized the **Christman in July lunch on Friday 26 July at the Irish Club**. This is a change from our previous plan as it was felt that the Irish Club was more convenient for members.

We also organized lunch on Friday 30 August at **Gary's Kitchen**, at 26 Denigen St Wanniasa – which is actually the address of the Erindale shops.

- A number of our members have not been well. In particular, **Pam Harris** is in hospital again. She originally went in with breathing issues, was there for a few weeks, came home – then had a small heart attack and returned to hospital. We wish her well.
- **Maureen Bell**, another of our long term members – albeit unable to attend meetings because of other commitments – broke her hip and has been in Canberra University Hospital for about a month. We hope she's gadding about soon.

Marina, the assistant Treasurer, gave a financial report as our treasurer, Karen Anable has been unwell. Our bank is now Beyond Bank at Cooleman Court where we have a community account. The meeting agreed to give Marina \$100 as reimbursement for costs on computer, printing, phoning etc.

Finally, we briefly looked at our **archival material** which **Chris Moyle** has been looking after for years and now needed to pass on to another member to look after. **One folder** contains information written and published about the group. **Another** contains information about Lung Life members, past and present right from the beginning of the group. **Val Siemionow** volunteered to be the Archivist – so please, any material you see about Lung Life, please give to Val or let him know.

Dates to Remember

Friday 26 July **Christmas in July Lunch** at the Irish Club.
Thursday 8 August Lung Life meeting with Pharmacist speaker.
Friday 30 August Lunch at **Gary's Kitchen** at Erindale shops.

Vaping laws have changed

From: [Vaping laws are changing in Australia. Here's what we know - ABC News](#)

And [Australia-first anti-vaping campaign uses threat of social harm, not cancer, to get its message across - ABC News](#)

Almost one in 10 people aged 14 to 17 currently vape, a five-fold increase since 2019, and rates for 18 to 24 years have quadrupled in that same time to 21 per cent. The Government is taking steps to prevent the harm that smoking originally did to people and to society. **From July 1**, vapes containing nicotine are only legally sold by pharmacies to people who have a prescription from their doctor.

However, **from October**, vapes will be more easily available. Pharmacies will be able to sell vapes containing nicotine to anyone over 18 years old, eliminating the need for a medical prescription. People under the age of 18 will still need a medical prescription before they can legally purchase a vape from a pharmacist.

Many feel that allowing vapes to be sold without a prescription is a **poor decision for public health**.

Meanwhile the Government is adding **anti-vaping to its anti-smoking campaign**. It will use TikTok, gaming, cinema, billboards and other platforms to communicate the social harms of vaping. The

Government is focussing on messages of addiction, loss of control and the mental health impacts and social isolation it could cause - as a pathway to addiction.

Lung Foundation Australia (LFA) has been involved in informing the Government and the general population about the dangers of vapes/ e-cigarettes for many years. In 2020, they reported on a study giving details of the concerns about vapes. See the website below.

[Ground-breaking Australian study confirms major concerns over e-cigarette safety - Lung Foundation Australia](#)

On their website, LFA also has quite a few entries on different aspects about vaping. See the sites below.

[E-cigarettes and vaping - Lung Foundation Australia](#)

[For young people - Lung Foundation Australia](#)

[Vaping and Young People-Youth \(age 12-17\) - Lung Foundation Australia](#)

As people brought up during a time when cigarettes were promoted as a positive thing and learnt the hard way that they weren't, it's saddening to see a repetition of the issue.

SHOUT (Self Help Organisations United Together)

SHOUT is a community organisation that supports self-help groups in Canberra. It provides members with a range of services and facilities to develop and support self-help groups in the ACT region. For full members, it offers admin advice, business management and advice, phone support, training for volunteers, meeting room hire and such services. For some groups, it provides a central address where mail can be picked up. Such groups include Bosom Buddies, Carers ACT, Epilepsy ACT and many more.

Some groups, like our Lung Life group, are affiliated members which gives us contact with SHOUT and its information but have less need to use its facilities. Other affiliated members include the Canberra Kidney Support Association, ACT Deafness Resource Centre, Haemophilia Foundation ACT, Sleep Apnoea and many others.

One of the big benefits of SHOUT is that it brings not-for-profit organisations together and enables community connection and networking. It also advocates with the ACT Government for common interests.

The SHOUT office provides a good contact point for the groups, referring and connecting people to its organisations. It is based in Collett Place, Pearce ACT 2607.

Phone: 02 6290 1984 Email: web@shout.org.au

Web address: [SHOUT - Self Help Organisations United Together](#)

Recently, Val Dempsey investigated SHOUT to see what they provide and to see if it would benefit Lung Life to become a full member rather than an affiliated member. However, she felt that our group, at the moment, didn't need the extra services that SHOUT provides.

The Chifley Health & Wellness Centre aka The Chifley Gym

The Chifley Gym is soon reopening with a new provider after The Y pulled out. From 1 August, it will be open for clinical services; from 1 September, we can all go. The gym will also be offering Chair Yoga, Yogam Exercise for older adults, Stretch and Mobility, and balance and falls prevention. This is thanks to a vigorous action group; and Government assistance to help buy equipment and support the gym/wellness centre for a period of time. If you want more detail, contact Dylan, the CEO, on:

Website: www.equipdalliedhealth.com.au. General Enquires: admin@equipdalliedhealth.com.au.

Effective Breathing Exercises for Singing – Helen Cotter

Here's an exercise to add to the straw exercise from the last newsletter. This one is **Practicing Slow Breaths for Deeper Breaths**. Slow breathing requires the diaphragm, while the chest produces short and shallow breaths. Breathing from the chest only takes more effort, tires your voice faster, and makes you run out of air too fast.

Stand with your legs slightly apart. Use your finger to close your right nostril, inhaling and exhaling using the only open nostril. Breathe a few times and switch sides. Draw air in with force and slow the sound to a low sound upon the exhale.

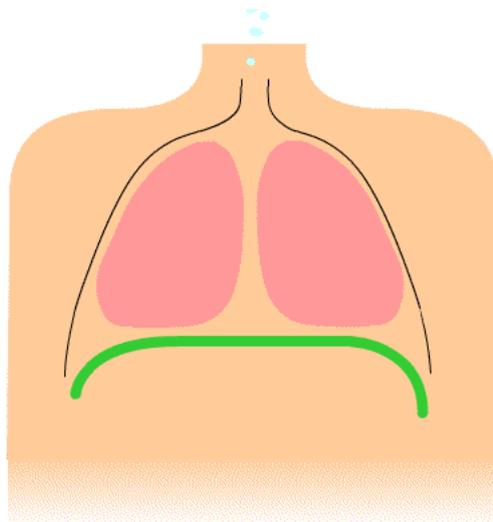
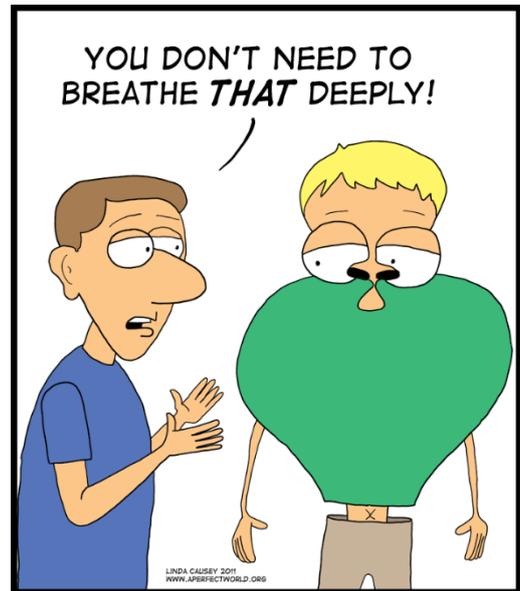
Blocking one of the nostrils forces the body to engage the diaphragm. The exercise should feel more natural the more you practice.

Such a simple exercise which can be done anytime – probably better when you're on your own.

[12 Effective Breathing Exercises for Singing \(zinginstruments.com\)](http://zinginstruments.com)

Shallow Breathing

[COPD and CO2 Retention: What You Need to Know – LPT Medical](#)



When you take too short or too shallow of breaths, your lungs have a hard time getting rid of enough CO₂. That's why it's important to keep your breathing under control and practice breathing exercises if you have COPD.

Many COPD patients tend to take more shallow breaths whenever they feel like they're having trouble breathing, such as during bouts of breathlessness or coughing. Unfortunately, that just makes the problem worse by making it easier for air and CO₂ to stay trapped in your lungs.

This happens because shallow breathing only uses the upper part of your lungs, which is why it is sometimes referred to as “top breathing.” As a result, stale air stays in the lower parts of your lungs, which leads to CO2 retention and makes it harder to breathe.

You can counteract this, however, by practicing breathing exercises in your spare time and remembering to use them when you feel short of breath. Exercises like diaphragmic breathing and pursed-lips breathing are especially helpful for training yourself to take deep, full breaths and push all the air out of your lungs when you exhale.

It also helps to strengthen your breathing muscles, which you can also do with aerobic exercise, wind instruments, and other forms of physical activity. You can even join special COPD exercise and therapy classes designed to help you improve your breathing, including pulmonary rehabilitation and music therapy courses.

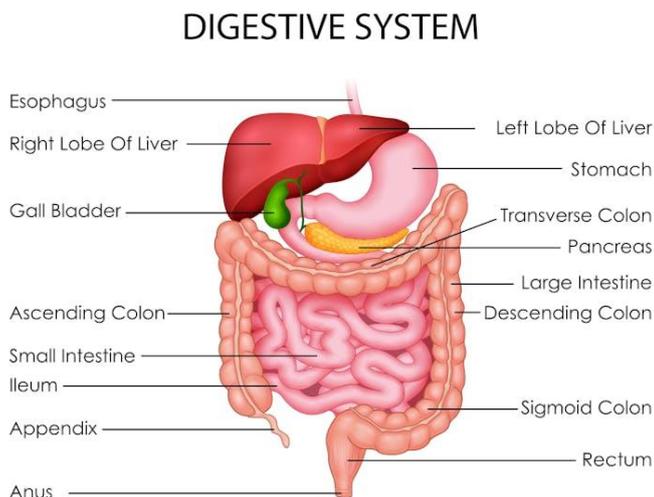
How do you Poo?

Adapted from: <https://theconversation.com/why-do-i-poo-in-the-morning-a-gut-expert-explains>

Published: June 17, 2024

Most people poo in the morning, shortly after breakfast. There are a few reasons. The first involves our circadian rhythm – our 24-hour internal clock that helps regulate bodily processes, such as digestion. For healthy people, our internal clock means the muscular contractions in our colon follow a pattern.

There’s minimal activity in the night. The deeper and more restful our sleep, the fewer of these muscle contractions we have. It’s one reason why we don’t tend to poo in our sleep.



Your lower gut is a muscular tube that contracts more strongly at certain times of day. Vectomart/Shutterstock

But there’s increasing activity during the day. Contractions in our colon are most active in the morning after waking up and after any meal. When we eat and drink our stomach stretches, which triggers a reflex which stimulates the colon to forcefully contract and can lead you to push existing poo in the colon out of the body.

The morning coffee is a very strong stimulant of contractions which leads to a bowel motion.

Not everyone has a bowel movement in the morning - or every day – but that’s no problem if you’re comfortable with that. However, if you do feel it’s a problem – or are affected by constipation, here are some tips:

- regular coffee is a good stimulant.
- Regular sleep habits help our circadian rhythms to work effectively.
- Regular physical activity and avoiding sitting down a lot are also important.
- Stress can contribute to irregular bowel habits; so minimising stress and focusing on relaxation helps.
- Fibre from fruits and vegetables also helps.
- Finally, having plenty of water/liquids is also important.

However, if there’s a major change in your bowel habits that’s concerning you, see your GP. The reason might be simple but sometimes this can signify an important change in the health of your gut.



COTA Assist

Looking to **build your digital literacy** or **stuck on using a particular part of technology**?

You can make an appointment with one of our patient, knowledgeable digital mentors and get one on one assistance to build your confidence using your digital device (mobile phone, tablet or laptop).

Contact the COTA ACT office on 02 6282 3777 to book your appointment.

Please note: Appointments are at our office at the [Hughes Community Centre](#).