

SPRING 2012

<p>Chronic Cough</p> <p>Page 2</p>	<p>The Choking Game</p> <p>Page 3</p>	<p>Ask an Educator</p> <p>Page 4</p>
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COPD:
The new name for
Chronic Bronchitis &
Emphysema

Promoting COPD Wellness through a Structured Therapeutic Singing Program

Donna Goodridge, RN, PhD

College of Nursing Professor and Acting Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies

There are many ways that people living with COPD can enhance their wellness. Exercise therapy, often provided in a structured pulmonary rehabilitation program, is an important way to maintain health. At the University of Saskatchewan, a group of researchers learned about therapeutic singing programs specifically for people with COPD being offered in Brazil and in the U.K.

Initial findings from these countries indicated that therapeutic singing classes were associated with increases in measures of quality of life, decreases in anxiety and possible improvements in perceptions of breathlessness. Last spring, we conducted an 8 week feasibility study led by an accredited music therapist with 14 volunteers enrolled in the Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program at the Saskatoon Field House. We found that that this intervention was feasible in terms of cost and program delivery. Participants were enthusiastic about the program and found it very enjoyable. A follow-up project was conducted between February and April of 2013 to more closely examine whether singing might impact the physical aspects of breathing as well as other measures of wellness. We are in the process of analyzing the data from this study and hope to have initial results by this summer.

Many thanks to all of those who so generously gave of their time and energy to take part in our project! We intend to keep working on new ways to promote the health of people with respiratory illnesses and look forward to sharing our results with you.





Most people don't take their
inhalers properly;
call our Helpline to learn if you are.

1-888-566-5864

Chronic Cough

Marion Laroque – Saskatoon

Respiratory Therapist & Certified Respiratory Educator

The Lung Association has begun an awareness campaign about that annoying cough that doesn't go away. If you've had a cough that lasts for 3 weeks or longer, and it's not improving, you should get it checked out.

There are 3 different groups of cough:

- 1. Acute cough – a cough lasting less than 3 weeks.** The common cold is the main cause of acute cough. See a doctor or visit an emergency room if you have any of these warning signs: extremely short of breath, turning blue in the lips or fingernails, swelling in the lips, or coughing up blood.
- 2. Sub-acute cough - a cough that lasts 3-8 weeks.** This type of cough may go away by itself, or it may also need treatment. If you answer yes to any of the following questions, please see your doctor.
 - Are you coughing up blood?
 - Are you short of breath?
 - Has your cough changed over time?
 - Are you losing weight without trying?
 - Are you coughing up phlegm?
 - Do you have a fever?
 - Do you currently smoke?
 - Did you smoke in the past?
 - Are you living with asthma or COPD or other respiratory conditions?
- 3. Chronic cough - a cough lasting 8 weeks or more.** Chronic cough is not a disease itself. It is a sign of something wrong.

Some of the most common causes of chronic cough include:

- Post-nasal drip syndrome, when mucus drips down your throat from the back of your nose
- Something at home or work that is irritating your nose or airway
- Allergies
- Asthma
- Smoking
- COPD
- Acid reflux (sometimes called gastro-esophageal reflux disease or GERD)
- Some high blood pressure medications

In rare cases a chronic cough can be caused by serious diseases like lung cancer or tuberculosis (TB). The Lung Association has developed a web site devoted to information on cough: <http://www.3weekcough.ca/> .

The Choking Game

Marion Laroque – Saskatoon

Respiratory Therapist & Certified Respiratory Educator

Call it the Choking Game, Pass Out, Space Monkey, the Fainting Game, or Flatliner - whatever the name - Canadian children are putting their lives at risk for a quick high. Children who engage in this dangerous 'game' use a belt or rope wrapped around the neck to cut off the blood supply and oxygen to the brain. In a group, they may take turns choking each other with their hands. The idea is to choke the player or themselves to the point of almost passing out. The lack of oxygen causes a quick, exhilarating high. The greatest danger is to children who play the game alone with no one nearby to release the pressure if they lose consciousness.

A study conducted in 2007 in Ontario found that approximately 79,000 students in grades 7-12 have played the Choking Game. At least 74 Canadian children have been sent to the hospital and at least 82 children in the USA have died. Many of the children who died were bright, athletic students intrigued by the idea of getting high without using drugs or alcohol. Some deaths that have been listed as suicides may, in fact, be accidentally caused by the Choking Game. A Texas study published in January 2012, found that the average age of the players was 14 years old.

The Choking Game has been around for generations. In 1921, the famous actress Kathryn Hepburn found her beloved older brother Tom who had accidentally hung himself practicing a hanging trick. The internet and social media have broadened children's awareness of the Choking Game. In a 2009 study, Dalhousie University found 65 YouTube videos of the game that had been watched 174,000 times. The web site rotten.com has an explanation of the game without any warnings or indications that it may be harmful.

Sean and Dawn Dawson of Saskatoon believe their son Zachary died last October while playing the Choking Game. They hope that public awareness of the dangerous practice will help to protect other children from the same fate. The advocacy group GASP (Games Adolescents Shouldn't Play) is working to increase awareness among parents and educators about the dangers. In Canada, the contact for this group is Sharron Grant, whose son 12-year-old Jesse died in 2005. The group's web site: www.gaspinfo.com publishes warning signs that parents should look for:

- Blood shot eyes
- Frequent or unusual headaches
- Strange marks on the neck
- Doors always locked
- Knots tied in objects in their bedrooms
- Marks on bedposts and closet rods where it's worn down
- Frequent disorientation after spending time alone

Please pass this information on to anyone you may know who has teenagers and to your children, grandchildren or great-grandchildren.

Saskatchewan Pulmonary Rehabilitation Programs by Health Region

Cypress

*Swift Current, Leader, Maple Creek,
Shaunavon*
778-9402

Five Hills

Moose Jaw
694-0201

Kelsey Trail

Melfort, Nipawin, Porcupine Plain
862-7248

Prairie North

North Battleford
446-6613

Meadow Lake
236-1579

Lloydminster
820-6262

Prince Albert-Parkland

Prince Albert
765-6590

Regina Qu'Appelle

Regina
Southland Mall
766-5125

Dr. Paul Schwann Centre
585-4004

Saskatoon

Humboldt
682-2603

Saskatoon
655-2480

Sun Country

Arcola, Radville, Redvers, Weyburn
455-2628

Sunrise

Yorkton
786-0768

Ask an Educator

Jaimie Peters – Saskatoon

Registered Nurse & Certified Respiratory Educator

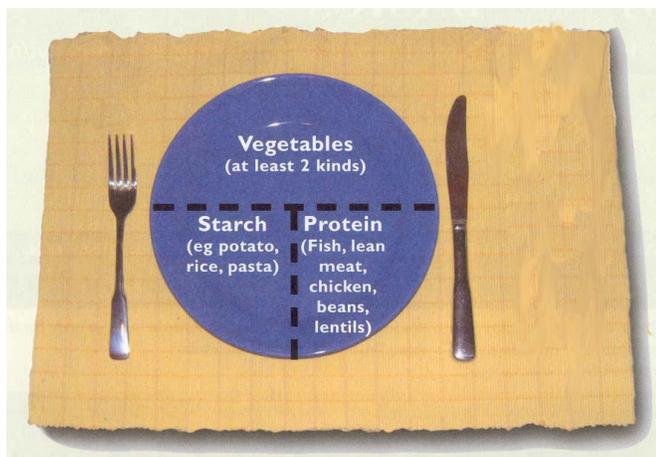


I have COPD and am *overweight*, what should I do?

Being overweight with COPD increases the workload on your heart and lungs. Furthermore, additional fat around the abdominal area demands more oxygen and makes it more difficult to breathe. Selecting healthy food items using *Canada's Food Guide* can help you to achieve a healthy body weight and breathe easier.

A dietitian can help you with your meal planning and with healthy low calorie food choices.

- Avoid “dieting” to lose weight. Adequate calories are important even if you are trying to lose weight
- Limit your intake of added fats and sugars
- Eat smaller meals and select lower calorie snacks
- Increase your intake of vegetables and fruits
- Choose whole grain breads and cereals
- Choose lower fat milk and cheese products
- Choose leaner meats, poultry and fish
- Trim the fat off meats, remove skin from chicken and avoid frying
- Choose lentils, dried beans and peas more often in your meals
- Follow the portions outlined in *Canada's Food Guide* or use the “**plate method**” to help with portion control.



Attention Sask COPD Patients!

Free Learning Series

The Lung Association is proud to present a series of three COPD Telehealth video presentations for patients & families across the province:

Thursday, May 31 at 2:30 pm

Speaker: Trent Litzenberger

Senior Physical Therapist & Program Coordinator for the LIVEWELL Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program, Saskatoon Health Region

Topic: What is COPD & Can Exercise Help?

Please contact the Lung Association for more information about a broadcast site near you.

1-888-566-5864



**COPD? Asthma? Sleep Apnea?
Quitting Smoking?**

1-888-566-LUNG (5864)

The Helpline is a free, confidential COPD information service provided by The Lung Association.

The helpline is staffed by Saskatchewan health care professionals with special COPD training.

Call for free printed materials!

Upcoming Support Group Meetings

Saskatoon Respiratos

Every 1st & 3rd Wednesday of the month – 1:30 pm
Mayfair United Church – 902 33rd St. W.

Call Debbie @ 664-4992 for more information.

Starting this fall 2012, the Lung Association will be combining all of our newsletters to one main Lung Newsletter. Please watch for our new newsletter sometime in October.

Lung Association of Saskatchewan, 1231 8th Street East, Saskatoon, SK S7H 0S5

1-888-566-5864 www.sk.lung.ca