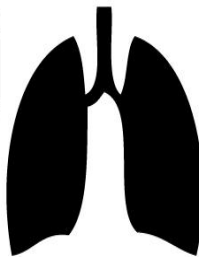


CANBERRA  
**LUNG LIFE**  
SUPPORT GROUP



**Newsletter July 2012**

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

**Editor:** Helen Reynolds 02 62597737 helenrey@creationcorporation.com.au  
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**Next Meeting**  
**Thursday 12 July 2012**  
**10.15 am – 12 noon**

**The Weston Club**  
**1 Liardet St**  
**Weston ACT**

**Geoffrey Dabb will surprise you with his talk about hobbies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

**Dates for your diary**

Wednesday 27 June 2012	World Spirometry Day
Thursday 12 July 2012	Canberra Lung Life Support Group Meeting
Tuesday 24 July 2012	Mid-Year Luncheon – Christmas in July
Tuesday 14 August 2012	Session with Physio students @ UC
Thursday 13 September 2012	Sarah Marshall, podiatrist, will speak at our meeting

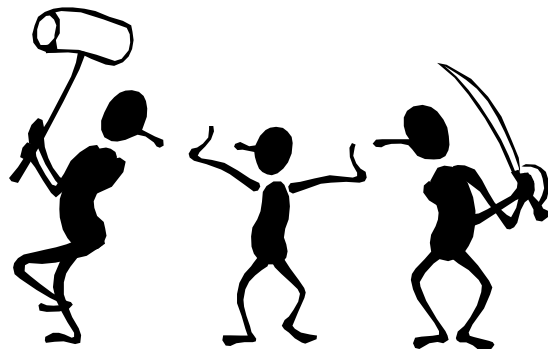
**June Meeting Report**

**Helen Reynolds**

The June meeting was an interesting combination of information and “show and tell” with all present contributing to the success of the meeting.

**The Wood smoke Issue**

The Greens in the ACT Legislative Assembly recently launched a discussion paper seeking to tighten up legislation on the woodsmoke issue. The paper is now in a period of consultation. CLLSG members can provide comment on the proposal. The paper is a good interesting read and tells you



*Disclaimer: the information in this newsletter comes from a variety of sources and is intended as a guide only.*

everything you want/need to know about wood smoke. This is not support of a political 'party' - we support any steps to reduce air pollution and improve our quality of life.

## **Rep on Medicare Local**

Congratulations to Helen Cotter who has been appointed to the Community Advisory Board of the ACT Medicare Local. Medicare Local is the organisation that informs and educates doctors and other medical professionals. The appointment is for a period of two years. The Board will hold its first meeting early in July. Helen will be a great voice for consumers, particularly those with chronic conditions, and in particular those with chronic lung conditions.

## **Traditional Christmas in July**

**When: Tuesday 24 July 2012**  
**Where: The Weston Club**  
**Time: Mid-day for 12.30pm**  
**Cost: \$25 per head**

Names will be taken at the July Meeting.  
Contact: Pam 6288 2053

### **Show and Tell**



The group clustered around the display board on which were pinned photos of the group at various ages and stages of development. We all knew who one person was, a self portrait, and we worked out Reuben but after that very difficult. Val was the most successful; she worked out five of the fourteen much younger people.

People had written a sentence or two about some significant event in their life. These reminiscences had the group chatting away, asking questions and telling snippets from their own past.

- Helen Cotter crossed and recrossed Australia, east to west and west to east on numerous occasions.
- In a small dingy Val, the intrepid tourist, took on a flooded Coopers Creek and Lake Eyre.
- Of significance to Betty and Noel is getting married, having four children and staying together for 56 years. Wow!!!!
- Robyn competed against Ilsa Konrads at a swim meet in Sydney.
- Pam talked to the Queen Mum when she was with some children, meeting the Queen Mum on her arrival at Canberra
- Dame Zara gave Val a personal tour of the Prime Minister's Lodge.

It was very interesting and something of a compliment to have fellow members share something of their lives with us.

## **COPD Exacerbation**

### **Helen Reynolds**

In its simplest terms, an exacerbation is *a sudden worsening of [COPD](#) symptoms (shortness of breath, quantity and color of [phlegm](#)) that typically lasts for several days.* (Wikipedia) A COPD exacerbation can also be defined as "an event in the natural course of the disease characterized by a change in the patient's baseline [dyspnea](#), (shortness of breath), [cough](#), and/or [sputum](#), that is beyond

normal day-to-day variations, is acute in onset and may warrant a change in medication in a patient with underlying COPD.” *Global Initiative for Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD)*.

### **Causes of COPD Exacerbation**

The top two causes of an exacerbation are infection of the airways or lungs and air pollution. Associated with more frequent episodes of COPD exacerbation are:

- smoking
- lack of a pulmonary rehabilitation program
- improper use of an inhaler
- and poor adherence to a drug therapy program.

Therefore, it is important that if you have been prescribed a treatment regimen for your COPD, you stick to the program and follow your doctor’s orders.

### **Signs and Symptoms of a COPD Exacerbation**

The main symptom of an acute exacerbation of COPD is increased breathlessness which is often accompanied by the following:

- increased cough and sputum production
- change in the colour and/or thickness of the sputum
- wheezing caused by a narrowing or blockage of the airways
- chest tightness, a result of increased amounts of mucus consolidated in the lungs and/or the narrowing or blockage of the airways
- fever.

### **Treatment of COPD Exacerbation**

If your exacerbation of COPD cannot be managed safely at home, you will be admitted to the hospital. Once there, your treatment, as determined by your health care provider, may include the following:

- Oxygen therapy
- Glucocorticosteroids (oral, IV and/or inhaled medications that treat inflammation)
- Antibiotics (if an underlying bacterial infection exists)
- Bronchodilators
- Respiratory stimulants
- Ventilatory support - non-invasive (by mask) or invasive (by means of a tube inserted into your lungs through your mouth).

### **Prevention of COPD Exacerbation**

Anything you can do to prevent an infection will go a long way in keeping your COPD under control. Preventative strategies that may help patients with COPD prevent acute exacerbation include:

- annual flu shots to help prevent the flu infection that can exacerbate the symptoms of patients with COPD
- handwashing
- balanced diet
- sufficient amount of exercise/activity
- adequate sleep

- avoiding exposure to environmental irritants such as air pollution (pay attention to air quality alerts) and extreme temperatures
- cigarette smoke (including secondhand smoke)
- avoiding crowds, especially during cold and flu season
- responding to any changes in your general health, immediately.

## **One Final Word**

COPD exacerbations are debilitating in, and of, themselves. Paying attention to your body, taking better care of yourself and taking steps towards prevention may ultimately help you to avoid a COPD exacerbation.

For further information about COPD exacerbation, be sure to talk with your primary care provider.

### Sources:

*Global Strategy for the Diagnosis, Management and Prevention of COPD*, Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD) 2006. Available from: <http://www.goldcopd.org>. *About.com.COPD*

Gorski, Lisa MS, RN, CS, CRNI; "COPD Exacerbation: Prevention and Home Management Protocol". Oasis Answers Inc.

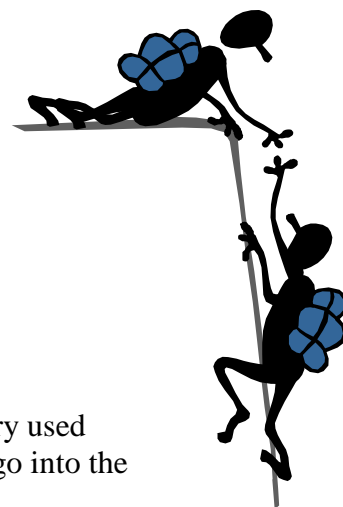
## **Need Help But Don't Know Where to Find It?**

### **The Citizens Advice Bureau ACT**

For free and accurate advice on a broad and varying range of topics ask The Citizens Advice Bureau who believe that community services and facilities are only as effective as people's access to them. If you have a problem relating to:

- government issues
- housing
- crisis help
- health
- legal advice
- social groups
- interest groups
- the weird and wonderful
- anything that's worrying you

**phone 6248 7988**



The answer to any and all of these problems is in a CONTACT directory used everyday by the friendly, experienced assistants who help people who go into the ACT Info Shop or call on the info line.

The Citizens Advice Bureau is committed to providing support to all ACT residents by enhancing their access to information and resources, and informing them of their rights and responsibilities as community members.

### **For Sale**

**Inogen portable oxygen concentrator; about 18 months old; bought new for about \$5500; a second hand price is asked for it.**

**If you are interested or want more details, you need to contact:**

**Virginia Young (Mobile): 0417 223 280**

For more information: <http://www.citizensadvice.org.au>

## A little light entertainment

Three brothers were discussing the birthday gift they were able to give their 95 year old mother. The first said, "You know I had a big house built for Mama."

The second said, "And I had a large theatre built in the house."

The third said, "And I had my Mercedes dealer deliver an SL600 to her."

The fourth said, "You know how Mama loved reading the Bible and you know she's nearly blind now. I met this preacher who told me about a parrot who could recite the entire Bible. I had to pledge to contribute \$50,000 a year for five years to the church, but it was worth it. Mama only has to name the chapter and verse, and the parrot will recite it."

The other brothers were impressed. After the celebration Mama sent out her "Thank You" notes. She wrote:

"Milton, the house is huge. I live in one room, but have to clean the whole house. Thanks anyway."

"Marvin, I'm old so I stay home. I have my groceries delivered. I never use the Mercedes. The thought was good. Thanks."

"Michael, you gave me an expensive theatre which holds 50 people. All of my friends are dead. I've lost my hearing, and I'm nearly blind. I'll never use it. Thank you for the gesture just the same."

"Dearest Melvin, you were the only son to have the good sense to give a little thought to your gift. The chicken was delicious Thank you so much."

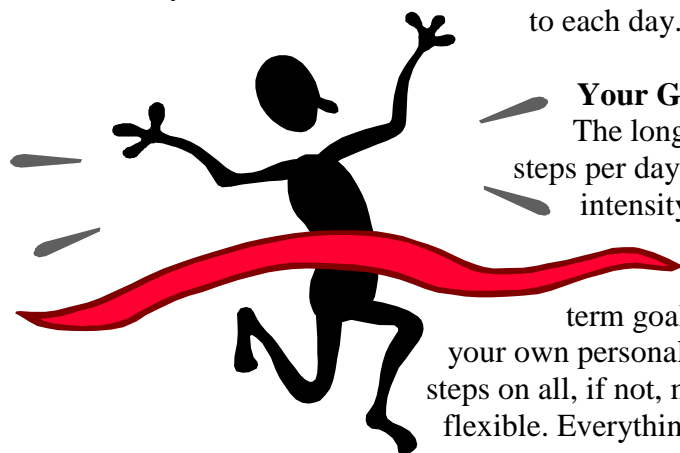
Love, Mama

## A simple action plan to get you moving

**Helen Reynolds**

If you are new to exercising or have not exercised regularly for the past 6 months, get yourself a pedometer and follow this simple action plan to get you started.

1. Wear your pedometer for 4 days making sure that at least one of the days is a weekend day. Record the number of steps you take each day.
2. Calculate the average number of steps you took each day. This is your "Baseline".
3. Add 500 (or whatever you think is an achievable number) to your Baseline and that is the number of steps you should try to achieve each day for the next week or fortnight.
4. Baseline + 500 (?) = Target number of Steps per day
5. The extra steps can be [incidental exercise](#) and or [planned exercise](#).
6. Once you are able to achieve that new number of steps comfortably, add an additional 500 steps to each day. (Baseline + 500 + 500 = Target Steps per day).



### **Your Goal**

The long term goal is to achieve between 8,000 and 10,000 steps per day and to incorporate at least 40 minutes of moderate intensity planned exercise on all, if not, most days of the week. But depending on your own personal baseline and level of fitness this might be a long term goal. The important thing is to continue to progress your own personal exercise plan and to try to achieve the required steps on all, if not, most days of the week. This plan, of course, is flexible. Everything depends on the individual and their capabilities.




Resource: [Liteneasy.com.au/nova/active\\_get\\_started\\_step1.html](http://Liteneasy.com.au/nova/active_get_started_step1.html)

## A fellow sufferer

Chris Moyle

On 16<sup>th</sup> July Australia's favourite songstress, Judith Durham, comes to Canberra. Judith suffers from bronchiectasis, which means she has a chronic cough and when on stage she coughs during the applause. She has a vegan diet, eating fruit and mostly green vegetables, as well as a lot of dried fruit and occasionally nuts. Judith says, "I am very conscious of what I eat, because it does affect my breathing."

I will be going along to her concert to hopefully be inspired by this bronchiectatic 68 year old.



### **"Living a Healthy Life with Long-Term Conditions" 2012 COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Do you have diabetes, asthma, heart disease, arthritis, cancer,  
back pain, obesity or any condition lasting longer than 6 months?  
Does it prevent you from living life as you would like?  
Cause you stress? Impact on your relationships?**

	<b>Arthritis ACT phone 6288 4244</b>	<b>Belconnen Health Centre</b>	<b>Phillip Health Centre</b>
<b>July</b>		Thursdays 10am- 12.30pm 26th	Tuesdays 10am- 12.30pm 24th & 31st
<b>August</b>		Thursdays 10am- 12.30pm 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd & 30th	Tuesdays 10am- 12.30pm 7th, 14th, 21st & 28th
<b>September</b>	Friday 12-2.30pm 21st, 28th		
<b>October</b>	Friday 12-2.30pm 5th, 12th, 19th & 26th	Thursdays 10am- 12.30pm 11th, 18th, 25th	Tuesdays 10am- 12.30pm 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th
<b>November</b>		Thursdays 10am- 12.30pm 1st, 8th & 15th	Tuesdays 10am- 12.30pm 6th & 13th

**To register for Health Centre courses or discuss course details please phone:  
Community Health Intake  
Phone 6207 9977 between 8am-5pm Monday-Friday**