



nelson asthma society inc
Better respiratory health for New Zealanders

BREATH EXPRESS

DECEMBER 2010

Nelson Asthma Society

50 Halifax Street

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Nelson 7040

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What the Society Offers

Current Membership: 141

- Asthma Education Centre
- Telephone advice
- Four Issues of Breath Express each year
- Four issues of the National Magazine A & R News
- Up to date asthma information
- Programmes, fact sheets and information pamphlets
- Speaker available
- Health professional training courses
- Dust Mite covers for sale
- CORD/COPD Support Groups
- Nebuliser Hire
- Nebuliser Kits for sale
- Hydro Pool Sessions

NBPHO

Respiratory Educators

Jean Weary and Shelley Ford can offer

- Home Appointments
- Spirometry Testing
- Telephone Assistance

Our Medical Advisers

Dr Nick Baker,
Dr Suzanne Washington

Our Committee

John Rogers, President
Bernard Stevenson, Treasurer
Kate Morgan (Secretary)
John Allen
Heather Cross-Mansell
Lyn Falconer
Jos Patterson

Manager:
Hilary Croft

President's Piece

The year seems to have flown past and our Nurse Educators appear to have settled into their new positions with Nelson Bays Primary Health.

Your committee has been working hard putting together a plan for the Asthma Society. In this plan we have set a number of objectives and strategies that we feel will enable us to achieve those objectives. The first three-monthly review of this plan will take place at the December committee meeting. In the meantime Hilary has settled into her new position as Asthma Society Manager (as distinct from her previous role as Office Manager).

This has taken the committee out of the day to day operations to a more appropriate governance/

monitoring role.

On October 1st, Hilary and I attended the Asthma Foundation Conference in Wellington. It was most interesting to be able to spend the day with the Presidents and Secretaries of other Asthma Societies and hear of their experiences, especially in the fund raising area. Unsurprisingly (for those who have lived there) Wellington turned on a fantastic day for the conference.

You will note that this newsletter is printed in colour and we have to thank the NBPH for their assistance in achieving this result.

Nelson Bays Primary Health is establishing an alliance governance group with membership taken from such groups as our-

selves. We want to be voted on to this group and I would encourage you, your family and friends to vote for us. Hilary has the details elsewhere in this newsletter.



The festive season is rapidly approaching and as we come to the end of another busy year, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all the very best for Christmas and the New Year.

Best Wishes

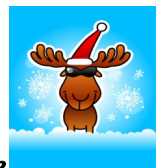
John

John C. Rogers
President

WJSHJNG YOU A MERRY CHRJSTMAS AND A HEALTHY, HAPPY NEW YEAR AND THANKS TO OUR WONDERFUL VOLUNTEERS, MEMBERS AND FUNDERS FOR YOUR ONGOJNG SUPPORT. "



Kindness is difficult to give away because it keeps coming back."



The NAS Office closes Thursday 16 December, and reopens Tuesday, 18 January 2011

Need help attending or returning home from our CORD exercise classes or Hydro Pool sessions? Then read on

New Zealand Red Cross offers a **FREE** community transport service for Nelson/Richmond and, depending on bookings, some surrounding areas (not unfortunately for Motueka).

This service provides medical and community transport to people who cannot otherwise afford or arrange to attend medical or community appointments.

The service is focused on provision to senior citizens (65+) in the first instance, but is open to all individuals who can demonstrate need or are referred to the service by a health provider. The drivers are Red Cross first-aid qualified volunteers.

Hours of operation:

Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm

Phone 03 546 5012 or email nelson@redcross.org.nz at least 3 days before appointment.



01 October GST increase

After some deliberation, and taking into account the recent rise in GST, we wish to inform you that from **1 April 2011 the cost of nebulizer hire will increase to \$6 per month (\$36 for six months hire).**



This increase is the first in over 10 years, and with this prior notice, we trust this will be of help to existing hirers. Annual membership/subscription will remain at \$10. If you have any queries or concerns, please give Hilary a call to discuss further.

There are still some subscription and nebulizer accounts outstanding for the 2010/11 year. If you can send payment to Hilary ASAP that would be appreciated. Thanks!

DONATIONS

- ☞ Asthma Foundation
- ☞ Grant
- ☞ COGS
- ☞ Mr N Crampton
- ☞ Mrs J Fitchett
- ☞ L Hart
- ☞ Nayland College, Social & Fundraising Committee
- ☞ Nelson College for Girls
- ☞ Mrs J Stratford



Thank You

Calendar - December, February, March

CORD Group NELSON
Reformed Church, Enner
Glynn,
2nd and 4th Wednesday of
the month 1.45-3.15 pm
December 8th
February 9th and 23rd
March 9th and 23rd

CORD Group MOTUEKA
Community Hospital,
3rd Monday of the month,
2-3.30 pm
***NO CORD GROUP FOR
DECEMBER (MOTUEKA)***
February 21st
March 21st

HYDRO POOL
3rd Wednesday of the month,
1-2pm
***NO HYDRO POOL SES-
SION IN DECEMBER.***
February 16th
March 16th



The Society passes on its condolences to the families of members and friends who have recently lost loved ones. Our thoughts also go to any members unwell at this time.

EXERCISE AND THE LUNGS

The amount of air you need to breathe in depends on how active you are. When you are sitting down you only take in about 15 breaths a minute, giving you around 12 litres of air. From this your lungs will extract just one fifth of a litre of oxygen. During exercise your breathing and heart rate increase. Exercising flat out, a top-class athlete can expect to increase his/her breathing rate to around 40 to 60 breaths a minute. This means they take in an incredible 100 to 150 litres of air, extracting around five litres of oxygen every single minute. Even those of us with more modest goals need to double our lung intake when we exercise. Our lungs must be able to respond to our body's increased demands for oxygen.

What happens when you exercise?

As you start to move about, the muscles in your body send messages to your brain that they need more oxygen. Your brain then sends signals to the muscles that control breathing - your diaphragm and the muscles between your ribs - so that they shorten and relax more often. This causes you to take more breaths. More oxygen will be absorbed from your lungs and carried to the muscles you are using to exercise - mainly your arms and legs.

Why do muscles need more oxygen?

For you to become more active your muscles will need to produce more energy. They do this by breaking down glucose from your food, but to do this they need oxygen. If there is too little oxygen they will try to produce energy in a different way. But this can lead to a build-up of a chemical called lactic acid, which causes cramp - something that many athletes are all too familiar with. Athletes train so that their lungs and muscles become more efficient and it takes longer for lactic acid to build up. This means that their muscles can work harder. In fact, everyone can benefit from exercise to strengthen their lungs and muscles.

What happens when your lungs don't work properly?

People with long-term lung problems such as COPD, may find their lungs unable to provide enough oxygen for their muscles to perform even simple activities. When walking short distances their lungs may struggle to keep up and this can cause breathlessness.

Physical training

Through exercise you can train your body so that more oxygen is delivered to your muscles. Unfortunately, many people with long-term lung problems are afraid to exercise. This is partly because they are worried that being breathless may be harming them. This isn't true. By gradually building up the exercise you take, you can help to improve your breathing and feel better. People with severe lung problems benefit a lot from even small amounts of exercise, so it really is worth keeping as active as possible. Begin slowly by doing arm and leg movements while you are sitting down. Then set yourself targets for walking about: from room to room, going to the front door, the bottom of the garden, down the road and so on. It's surprising how quickly you'll be able to do more.

Breathing control

The 'breathing control' techniques mentioned here are not suitable for everyone with COPD. Please check with your GP, CORD group physiotherapist or respiratory nurse educator whether you should use them. (Don't forget our CORD group physiotherapists can help teach you breathing control and suitable exercises).

Breathing control concentrates on using the lower chest with relaxation of the upper chest and shoulders. This encourages you to use the diaphragm more efficiently. Concentrate on allowing your abdomen (tummy) to move out as you breathe in, rather than allowing it to be sucked inwards. Practice breathing control with one hand on your abdomen. Breathing control will help slow down your breathing rate and will reduce any anxiety if you do become breathless.

You can access a referral form to the Respiratory Nurses by going to [www.bewell.org.nz/education/primary health care nursing/respiratory nurses](http://www.bewell.org.nz/education/primary%20health%20care%20nursing/respiratory%20nurses).

Produced by Nelson Bays Primary Health



Sadly one of recent Life Members, John McCaughey, passed away recently. Judith Fitchett (past President & Life Member) attended John's service of remembrance and reports that John enjoyed playing bowls, listening to country music and took an active part in the Salvation Army church.

John was born in 1928 and died at home on 27 September 2010 – we send our deepest sympathy to John's family and friends.

A common remark from COPD sufferers is that the weather is the main culprit behind worsening symptoms such as coughing, breathlessness and an increase in phlegm.

How is this possible?

Several factors can play a part in this such as temperature changes, humidity, barometric pressure and even strong winds.

◆ Temperature changes

Extreme conditions can have a stressful effect on the body as we try and maintain our body temperature. This occurs as we use up our energy to try and keep warm or cool. In doing so, our bodies use more oxygen. Another factor is that breathing in hot or cold air can have an irritating or drying effect on the airway causing it to tighten.

◆ Strong winds

If it is windy, it takes more energy to walk into the wind causing you to become tired far quicker.

◆ Humidity

Increasing humidity can cause an increase in the density of the air we breathe – therefore it increases the work of breathing.

◆ Barometric pressure

A drop in the barometric pressure which is caused by a weather front causes a drop in the available oxygen in the air.



What to do to minimize the impact of the weather on your COPD

- ◆ **Most importantly** ensure you take your medications as prescribed by your GP
- ◆ Breathe through your nose to dry and moisten the air, use a scarf around your nose and mouth
- ◆ Stay inside on hot humid days
- ◆ Arrange outings for times when temperatures are not so extreme
- ◆ Drink plenty of water especially on hot days
- ◆ Try and park in the shade on hot days



PLEASE VOTE FOR US ON-LINE

This is your opportunity to help us have a seat on the newly formed advisory group AGG (Alliance Governance Group) to the Nelson Bays Primary Health Board.

Vote for us so we can represent you by going on-line to www.bewell.org.nz/AGG and follow the instructions. That's all you have to do.

The voting process will take place in the first three weeks of December and the successful candidates will be announced mid-January. The first meeting is to take place in February 2011.



This group will be established, for a 12 month trial initially, to enable community groups to be heard and involved in issues regarding primary health care. Community groups can have an influence on how money is spent and activities directed by NBPH in primary health care to improve the health outcomes for our region. The group will be chaired and supported by the Community Representatives on the NBPH Board.

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT – GO NOW TO VOTE FOR NELSON ASTHMA SOCIETY!

DO YOU USE SPIRIVA ?

Did you know that the needle inside your handihaler which pierces your medication capsule can go blunt over time ? It is recommended that you get this checked at least once a year to ensure everything is in working order and the right amount of medication is getting dispensed through your device.



When you're next seeing your GP or practice nurse – ask them to check it for you – you might need to get another handihaler – either through your General Practice or purchase one at your nearest pharmacy.