

President's Post

Don't Delay Your Care

For the past two years, Breath Savers has been emphasizing the importance of not delaying your care by encouraging regular visits with your family doctor or specialist for your continued good health. Doctors' offices, labs and imaging facilities (just to name a few) have all taken steps to keep their patients and their facilities safe from the COVID-19 virus.

Unfortunately, not everyone reads this newsletter. In the Metro Los Angeles region, some area hospitals and medical groups are sounding alarms as some people continue ignoring their symptoms and are waiting to the last minute to go to emergency rooms because they are still fearful of contacting COVID-19.

The local medical community is anxious because many of these patients are dying unnecessarily. Heart disease rates are soaring, diabetes is going unchecked, serious strokes are on the rise, and emergency department physicians are attending to more patients who would not be in the emergency department if they had sought preventative medical care from their regular doctors.

Please, don't delay your care and if you haven't had your vaccines or your booster, take your shot! Protect yourself! Protect your family! Protect others!

With all the dangers from COVID-19 and the different variants bombarding the news, remember FLU season is here. Please get your flu vaccine! With the ebb and flow of COVID-19 patients in our local hospitals, if you are hit hard by the flu and are unvaccinated, there may be a

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How to cope with COPD, Allergies & Anxiety

Through observation and research, doctors found that patients with COPD, who also have an allergic disease, experience higher levels of respiratory illness and are at a higher risk for COPD exacerbation. Breathlessness during a COPD flare-up is severe and is now a trigger of anxiety for COPD patients. “One of the most basic elements our bodies need to survive is oxygen, which we obtain through breath. COPD impacts one’s ability to breathe deeply and this alone can result in anxiety, not to mention the psychological stress that can arise from living with chronic illness,” says Caryn Blanton, MSW, LCSW, a licensed clinical social worker at Rush University Medical Center.

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Identifying your allergy triggers, understanding how anxiety affects your COPD symptoms, learning/practicing breathing and relaxation techniques, and allowing your body time to recuperate are vital to coping with your COPD challenges.

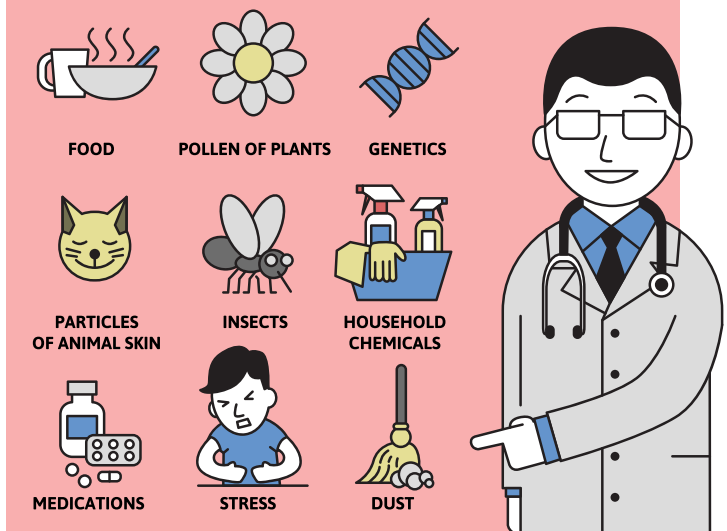
Identify Your Allergy Triggers: You may be focusing on taking medication and trying to stay active in an effort to manage your COPD symptoms. However, you might forget the impact that allergies can have on your COPD.

Why Do I Have Allergies? An allergy is when your immune system reacts to a substance, known as an allergen. Allergens can be found in dust mites, pets, pollen, insects, ticks, molds, foods, and compounds in certain medicines.

What Are My Allergy Triggers? It is worth asking your doctor to refer you to an allergist who can conduct blood and/or skin tests to determine what you are allergic to. A word of caution, not all medical insurances will cover such tests; it’s best to check first.

How Does Anxiety Play a Role with My COPD Symptoms? When our breath becomes shallow our brain can sometimes perceive there to be a stressful situation at hand even when there isn’t one present.

TRIGGERS

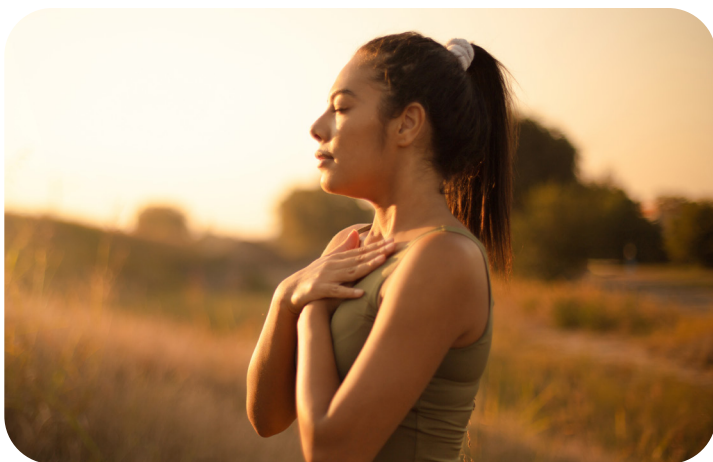


This can cause a stress response in our body, often referred to as anxiety. It is important to understand that this is a normal function of our brain in finding ways to cope with our shortness of breath.

How Do I Cope When I am Having a COPD Flare-Up, an Anxiety Attack and Are Being Beset with Allergies? This is why you need to learn and practice techniques to help you stay calm when you feel a COPD exacerbation coming on:

Breathing: To help restore your regular pattern of breathing faster, use Pursed Lip breathing. Pursed breathing is similar to blowing out a candle. Inhale air through your nose and then gradually let out the air through pursed lips while keeping the mouth nearly shut. This forces air to stay in your body longer and opens up airways for a longer period of time. Using this technique at least 10 times when you begin to feel breathlessness or when you are stressed. This can slow down your breathing and help you achieve a more “normal” pattern.

Relaxation: The power of suggestion is known to be very strong. Thoughts of stress bring on stress. Visualization is a relaxation technique where you go to a quiet place, isolate all annoying sounds, darken



the room or lay with your eyes closed. This will help your body to relax by focusing on each body part.

When focusing on your mind, lead it through peaceful images and sounds. An example could be thoughts of a stream of water with a green grass meadow running next to the babbling brook or the singing of songbirds amongst trees that give comforting shade on a spring day.

Conjuring up such images works for many people, and they experience immediate relaxation.

Recover: It is important to lay still for a minimum of five to 10 minutes after a bout of breathlessness to help restore a normal breathing pattern. Do not be in a rush to get up and start normal activity.

If these actions seem like a lot, remember you are experiencing shortness of breath compounded by an allergic reaction with an anxiety attack about to start. Take the time to recover!

Each Breath, A blog of the American Lung Association's Editorial Staff, November 27, 2018

Everyday Health, Author: Andrew Krieger, Medical Reviewer: Farrokh, MD

President's Post *continued from page 1*

shortage of available hospital beds. We know how important it is to manage your health and your doctors' appointments. Remember, now is the time, **please don't delay your care!**

Please schedule a physical check-up with your primary care physician or your specialist(s) to assess your current condition. For those who live in the San Gabriel Valley and you need a doctor, visit **[Emanatehealth.org/doctors/](https://emanatehealth.org/doctors/)** or call **626.483.4310** to schedule an appointment at Emanate Health Care Center, a multi-specialty outpatient clinic in West Covina (adjacent to the Emergency Department at Queen of the Valley Hospital), for the entire family.

Do you live outside of Emanate Health's service area? Google your local hospital; they will have a list of doctors who can help you and your family members with their health needs.

We all hope to be able to resume our regular in person gatherings soon. Breath Savers is continuously in contact with Emanate Health to monitor when we will be able to get together in person again. I personally miss your camaraderie dearly and know many of you feel the same. When we have definite news to share with you, be assured that we will let you know!

Please be well,

Pat Jones

President, Breath Savers

IMPORTANT WAYS TO BOOST YOUR IMMUNITY

Your immune system is a complex network of cells, organs and tissues that helps your body fight against infections, protect against serious diseases and helps you heal faster from injury. This key defender of your health will need some extra support over the years.

“As we get older, our physical self is not as strong and robust as we were when we were 22 and the same holds true for our immune system,” says William Schaffner, MD, an infectious disease specialist at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine in Nashville, TN.

Your body is likely to produce fewer infection-fighting T-cells that it once did, and you may also have higher levels of chronic inflammation. Both factors can make you more vulnerable to illness. However, you can take several steps to help bolster your immunity. Experts recommend the following:

GET NEEDED VACCINES

If you have been vaccinated against diseases such as measles or mumps, that protection remains throughout adulthood, according to Dr. Schaffer.

But some illnesses are trickier. For example, after you have chickenpox, the virus lies inactive near your brain and spinal cord. It can reactivate years later to cause shingles, a painful blistering body rash.

What Do We Need to Maximize Our Immunity?

An annual flu vaccine: People 65+ are at a higher risk for complications especially if we are struggling with any pulmonary complications. There are two versions of the flu shot for older adults.

Fluzone High-Dose contains four times the antigen as a regular flu shot. Antigens helps our body build up protection against the flu viruses.

Fluad Quadrivalent contains an ingredient that helps your body create a stronger immune response after being vaccinated.

According to Dr. Schaffner, both work well and he recommends you receive whichever your primary care physician or pharmacy has in stock. The flu season runs through May into June, we still need to stay vigilant. Wearing masks and social distancing are still great protection from any virus.

A Pneumococcal Vaccine: This helps prevent pneumonia, a potential and serious complication of the flu and COVID-19. There are two vaccines depending on your age and over-all health. Please ask your family doctor for his recommendation.

A COVID-19 Booster: If you haven't gotten your first round of COVID-19 vaccine, please ***Don't Delay Your Care!*** At some point this year, there will be another wave of a variant of the COVID-19 virus. The CDC advises a booster shot six months (two months for J&J) after your second vaccine shot.

The second booster can be given four months after the first booster. Dr. Schaffner points out, “Since older adults have a less robust immune system than younger ones, it makes sense that the protection afforded by the vaccines may wane faster for them.”

A Shingles Vaccine: According to the CDC, Shingrix, a newer vaccine, is about 97% effective in people in their 50's and 60's, and 91% effective for those who are 70+. The vaccine is given in two doses, with two to six months apart.

Tdap Vaccine: If you are unsure whether you got this vaccine as a teenager, you will probably need to get one for your protection against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis. The CDC advises that Boostrix be used for adults 65+ when feasible. A booster shot every 10 years is needed.

Food for Health & Immunity

An eating style that includes a wide range of nutrients, such as the Mediterranean diet, may help to influence in your immune system's response and your overall health. A study published in the journal *Frontiers in Nutrition*, March 2021, found that regions where people were more likely to follow this dietary pattern had fewer infections and deaths from COVID-19.

"It may also help ramp down chronic inflammation, which can contribute to worse outcomes from the disease," says Katherine L. Tucker, PhD, director of the Center for Population Health at the University of Massachusetts-Lowell.

Dr. Tucker recommends a largely plant-based diet, rich in fruits and vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds (almonds & sunflower seeds), along with small amounts of healthy fats, like olive oil. Dr. Tucker also recommended omega-3 fatty acids (salmon or sardines). She also suggested low-fat yogurt, which contains probiotics, "good" bacteria, that help build your gut microbiome. A healthy microbiome is a key for immunity, says Lauri Wright, PhD, chair of the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics at the University of North Florida in Jacksonville.

As with past articles on nutrition, all things in moderation!

There are two more ways to help increase your immunity, walking and sleeping.

30 to 45 minutes of brisk walking daily helps improve the functions of T-Cells*. That is not always possible for us. We either have orthopedic challenges or we do not wish to be that far from our home. Walking the length of our driveway several times in the morning and afternoon will help you build immunity.

* A T-Cell is a type of lymphocyte. T-Cells are one of the important white blood cells of the immune system and play a central role in the adaptive immune response. T-Cells can be distinguished from other lymphocytes by the presence of a T-Cell receptor on their cell surface.

With those daily walks, you will be tired by nighttime. A good night sleep is necessary for many reasons. Every night of lousy sleep destroys some natural killer cells, which you need for good immunity. A 2021 study published in the journal *Sleep Health* found that people who got less than 5 hours of sleep a night were 44% more likely to report a head or chest cold than those who slept for 7 to 8 hours.



Tech Talk

by Karl Urlie

“Protect Yourself from Online Scammers”

Four Signs That It’s a Scam

1. Scammers **PRETEND** to be from an organization you know.

Scammers often pretend to be contacting you on behalf of the government. They might use a real name, like the Social Security Administration, the IRS, or Medicare, or make up a name that sounds official. Some pretend to be from a business you know, like a utility company, a tech company, or even a charity asking for donations. They use technology to change the phone number that appears on your caller ID. So the name and number you see might not be real.



2. Scammers say there’s a **PROBLEM** or a **PRIZE**.

They might say you’re in trouble with the government. Or you owe money. Or someone in your family had an emergency. Or that there’s a virus on your computer. Some scammers say there’s a problem with one of your accounts and that you need to verify



some information. Others will lie and say you won money in a lottery or sweepstakes but have to pay a fee to get it.

3. Scammers **PRESSURE** you to act immediately.

Scammers want you to act before you have time to think. If you’re on the phone, they might tell you not to hang up so you can’t check out their story. They might threaten to arrest you, sue you, take away your driver’s or business license or deport you. They might say your computer is about to be corrupted.



4. Scammers tell you to **PAY** in a specific way.

They often insist that you pay by sending money through a money transfer company or by putting money on a gift card and then giving them the number on the back. Some will send you a check (that will later turn out to be fake), tell you to deposit it, and then send them money.



What You Can Do to Avoid a Scam

Block unwanted calls and text messages. Take steps to block unwanted calls and to filter unwanted text messages.

Don’t give your personal or financial information in response to a request that you didn’t expect. Legitimate organizations won’t call, email or text to ask for your personal information, like your Social Security, bank account, or credit card numbers.

If you get an email or text message from a company you do business with and you think it’s real, it’s still best not to click on any links. Instead, contact them using a website you know is trustworthy. Or look up their phone number. Don’t call a number they gave you or the number from your caller ID.

Resist the pressure to act immediately. Legitimate businesses will give you time to make a decision.

Anyone who pressures you to pay or give them your personal information is a scammer.

Know how scammers tell you to pay. Never pay someone who insists you pay with a gift card or by using a money transfer service. And never deposit a check and send money back to someone.

Stop and talk to someone you trust. Before you do anything else, tell someone — a friend, a family member, a neighbor — what happened. Talking about it could help you realize it’s a scam.

Report Scams to the FTC. If you were scammed or think you saw a scam, report it to the Federal Trade Commission. www.ReportFraud.ftc.gov.

Information provided by the Federal Trade Commission, pamphlet dated 2020

https://consumer.ftc.gov/sites/default/files/articles/pdf/1009a_how_to_avoid_a_scam.pdf



The Sunshine Corner

April

May

June



Daisies



Lily of the Valley



Rose

Sunshine on my
shoulders makes me
happy.

Sunshine in my eyes
Can make me cry.

Sunshine on the
Water looks so
lovely

Sunshine almost
Always makes me
High.

John Denver

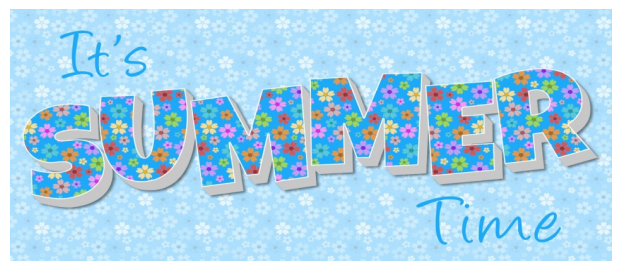


A kind word
is like a
Spring Day

*Spring adds
new life and
new JOY to all
that is.*



*Faith does not
make things easy
It makes them possible
Luke 1:37*



April is:

April Fools Day

Easter Sunday

Tax Day, April 15

May is:

Mother's Day

Peace Officers Memorial Day

Memorial Day

June is:

Flag Day

Father's Day

First Day of Summer



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



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Cope Don't Mope

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