

Warwick & District Breathe Easy Group

Spring/Summer Newsletter

Introduction

Future evening meetings and Bank Holidays

February's Meeting

The winter months can be a very difficult time to cope with for anyone with a lung condition. Windy and cold weather can make breathing more difficult and the ever present risk of infection can make you wary of social contact. However, at this time of year you can start to see the longer daylight hours returning and imagine the spring to come. So please try to stay positive, every year may offer something better for everyone.

Tony Brown, Chairman

It has been agreed that we won't hold an evening meeting when it would fall on a Bank Holiday. This starts from 2nd May 2005 when there will not be a meeting. The next meeting is on 6th June 2005 and the topic is the Buteyko breathing method. On 4th July the speaker is Dr Jones, Chest Consultant at Warwick Hospital.

February 7th Meeting Ruth Breeze, Community Dietician

For our first meeting this year we had a good mix of old and new members as well as Mo Fowler and Caroline Johnson from the British Lung Foundation and Kat a potential volunteer helper for the group.



Community Dietician Ruth Breeze was an excellent speaker. Her talk on "Eating Right" tips for people with COPD was very helpful for anyone wanting to eat healthily. For those who

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March's Meeting

find it difficult to eat enough, her tips on eating and drinking were a good idea. For example: - to sit upright when eating, drinking between meals rather than with food as this tends to reduce your appetite. If you feel you would benefit from advice about your diet, then your doctor can refer you to the Community Dietician for help.

The announcements included a request for volunteers to help with our collection days on the 11th and 12th March at the Asda Superstore in Leamington, and the sale of two commemorative roses to help mark the 20th birthday of BLF this year. One is called the Princess of Wales Hardinkum priced at £5.95 with 31.52 from each sale going to BLF and the other Breathe taking Hargalore, which costs £6.40 with £1.63 going to BLF. Order forms available from Linda.

March 7th Meeting Lynn Fletcher – Taking medication correctly

Our speaker at the March meeting was Lynn Fletcher, Respiratory Nurse Specialist talking about inhaled medication.

Lynn brought a wide variety of inhalers and demonstrated the correct use and technique for us, the patients, to get the most out of them.

She demonstrated some useful accessories to help users of the "Ventolin" type of inhaler, eg "spacer device" so that users are able to inhale each dose in 5 breaths instead of



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Asda Supermarket Collection

British Lung Foundation Helpline

Breathing Space magazine

Lung Exercise Pilot Project

20th Birthday Ties

one big breath, plus a “handy haler” clip on handle for anyone that has difficulty gripping and pressing the inhaler to release the metered dosage.

Lynn emphasised the importance of always following the Patient Information leaflet that comes with each inhaler.

She then gave her time to speak to individual members regarding their medication.

Many thanks Lynn!

Group members braved a very cold wind to stand in the foyer at the Leamington branch of the Asda Supermarket to collect funds for the British Lung Foundation. We started at Friday lunchtime and finished at 5pm on the Saturday and we raised over £300.

The helpline is now open and is staffed by a respiratory nurse and general advisers (with special training in benefits advice). The team is there to answer your questions and get you the information you need.

***The line is open Monday – Friday 10.00 am – 6.00 pm
The number is 08458 50 50 20***

If you are a member of Breathe Easy you should have received your copy of the new style magazine. The new magazine is also being sent to all GP surgeries as well as to all Breathe Easy supporters. Next time you are at your GPs, please have a look for it and if you cannot see it, please ask the receptionist where it is!

If you want to join Breathe Easy please see Linda for an application form.

The Department of Health are funding lung exercise pilots and ten Breathe Easy groups have been chosen to participate in the classes. Malvern and Worcester, Birmingham South and Glenfield are the three groups, which are most local to us. If you feel you could travel to these areas then you can register to participate by contacting Jo Bloom on 020 7688 5592 or e-mail Jo.bloom@blf-uk.org. The classes will be starting very soon and will take place every week for 6 months run by a fitness instructor.

Specially designed 20th birthday ties are now available to buy. Order forms are available from Linda at the evening meetings.

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Give it some welly

Buy a red welly and contribute to the British Lung Foundation. Hunter the maker of the famous green welly to celebrate its 50 years has designed a limited edition red welly with a donation going to BLF for everyone sold. The "giving welly" wellies start at £35 for children's and up to £50 for adults. Can be purchased by mail order on 020 76035522 or visit www.giving-welly.co.uk

BLF manifesto

The British Lung Foundation calls on the next Government to

- Provide a specialist respiratory paediatrician in every paediatric unit.
- Ensure pulmonary rehabilitation is available to all lung disease patients who could benefit from it.
- Provide ambulatory oxygen to all lung disease patients on long term oxygen therapy.
- Prepare a treatment and care strategy for mesothelioma
- Provide palliative care to patients with end stage chronic lung disease.
- Increase the number of PET scanners in the NHS to ensure that all patients have quick and equal access to imaging facilities.
- Introduce routine lung function tests at GP consultations for all patients with a smoking history.
- Ban smoking in all enclosed public places and work places.

The weeks before a General Election are a unique opportunity to seek a commitment from your local politicians to support the British Lung Foundation and Breathe Easy if they are elected.

Your newsletter

Please do let me have your views about the newsletter. I would very much welcome any contributions for the newsletter. I exchange copies of newsletters with other groups in the Midlands. Recently the Telford Group wrote "I have found the Warwick & District newsletter most interesting full of information. Looking at its future programme I see great emphasis on speakers with direct connections to patient care. Also they carry more news about British Lung Foundation. All things that we could copy".

Further information

About group activities available from Linda Kay,
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