

TAKE A **BREATH****Four
Seasons in
One Day****Clocks
Changing****New
Resources****FREE calls to
Advice Line
0808 801 0899****I'm in control
of my COPD,
it's not in
control of me!****A story about one person's
experience with COPD**

I hadn't really noticed the breathlessness before I went into hospital. Well, I suppose I had but I ignored it. I thought it was just because I was a smoker, and I didn't want to go to the doctor because I knew I would just get told to stop. It wasn't like I hadn't tried! The thing I would tell other people is to keep trying to stop. I managed it after being in hospital and this time it was easy.

When I was in hospital, I was terrified. I couldn't even walk to the toilet for the first few days, I was so breathless. It was such a scary time. For a while afterwards I thought my life was over. I couldn't manage the things that I had done before. Even being with the grandkids was hard as I couldn't run after them like I used to.

My respiratory nurse gave me a **self management plan**, which became like my bible. I was able to speak to my doctor and let them know how I was

feeling. Having the plan gave me back-up to know what I was talking about. I had to explain it to some of the GPs at first, but now they know that I'm in control of my condition. They seem to listen to me a bit more. I know what signs I need to look out for and I can spot them quicker. I have what I call rescue medication at home and I tell my doctor what I'm doing. I think this has made such a big difference to my confidence.

The best thing that I did was the **Pulmonary Rehabilitation** class. I must admit I wasn't keen on it at first. I thought it wasn't for me. I went though, and I have to say it was definitely the best thing I did. I was able to go back to work, and I think it helped give me more confidence.

I'm sure it's by doing all of these things that I managed to get back to work. At first I was really frustrated as I couldn't manage to do what I had done before, but I learned to pace myself. For

example, I used to clean my windows all at once in a couple of hours. Now if I did that I'd be too tired to do anything else for days. I now clean one window a day. It takes me longer, but I can still do it! Pacing has been a real lesson for me. I've learned to prioritise the things that matter to me.

The thing I'm most pleased about is being able to go for a walk. I was scared to try although I wanted to, but I spoke to my doctor and together we came up with a plan. I make sure I have my inhaler, a drink and my mobile phone. These things all make the walk easy for me and I've got confidence that I can do it. It does make me breathless, but I use my exercises that I learned from the class and they really help.

**As I say, I'm in control of the
COPD and it's not in control
of me.****CALL FOR ARTICLES**

Do you have some exciting information, an interesting story or a helpful hint to share with people affected by chronic lung disease?

We'd love to hear from you:

Lorna Stevenson
Respiratory Co-ordinator
Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland
E-mail:
Lorna.Stevenson@chss.org.uk
Telephone: 0131 225 6963

FOUR SEASONS IN ONE DAY

Scottish spring weather can be a mystery. We never know what to expect some days! Rain, snow, wind and sun can appear quite literally in a flash. We end up carrying brollies, wellies, gloves and suncream! Planning everyday tasks can be a challenge especially when living with a long term chest condition.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR YOU?

Changes in temperature can cause shortness of breath. Breathing cold air can irritate the airways causing them to become tight and narrow. When the airways are smaller it is more difficult to get air in and out of the lungs.

At the other end of the spectrum, hot and humid weather can also cause problems. When it's humid there is more moisture and less oxygen in the air. This can also increase the number of dust mites and mould in the air we are breathing. All of these changes can affect your breathing.

SO WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Listening to your body and finding a balance is vital. Pacing yourself by resting and conserving your energy will help. However being as active as you can, within your own limits, is also important.
- It is very important to make sure you are taking all your medications as directed by your doctor. If you are unsure about your tablets or need help with your inhaler make an appointment with your nurse who can advise you.
- Take your bronchodilator medicine, usually an inhaler, about half an hour before you go out. This will open up your airways and make your breathing feel easier. Remember to take your reliever inhaler out with you.
- Check the weather before going out. By signing up to the CHSS Weather Text Alert service we can send you a text first thing in the morning so you can plan your day.

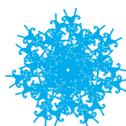


If it is a hot day:

- Try to arrange jobs, activities or appointments first thing in the morning when it is cooler.
- Circulate air during a hot day with a fan and open windows.



- In warm weather try to keep well hydrated, ice cubes and ice lollies are great for this.



When the weather is a bit colder:

- Try to arrange jobs in the afternoon when the day will have warmed up.
- Scarves are a must when it's cold. Covering your nose and mouth traps warm air and prevents you breathing cold air.
- Heat is lost from your head so remember a hat.
- Layers of clothes help contain more heat than a single item.
- In the colder weather regular hot meals and hot drinks provide your body with the energy it needs to keep you warm.

HOW DOES THE TEXT SERVICE WORK?

The CHSS Advice Line nurses will check the weather and air quality every weekday morning. If the weather or air quality is likely to be a problem in your area, the Advice Line nurses will send a text to your mobile phone to let you know.

This is a free service and you can join by either texting **WEATHER to 66777** or by phoning the Advice line nurses on freephone **0808 801 0899**.

"It is especially useful for me when there is pollen or cold weather because they affect my chest badly."

COPING WITH THE CLOCK CHANGE

Clocks changing affect us more than we think!

British Summertime kicks in next month on 29th March. The clocks will go forward and we lose an hour in bed.

But what effect does this have on your sleep? Many of us find it hard to adjust to the time change as our body clocks have to be re-set. Although it is only an hour, it can take weeks for some people to get back into their routine and feel normal again.

Those who are getting seven to eight hours of good quality sleep, and go to bed a little early the night before, will probably cope ok. However, if you are already sleep-deprived you're more likely to suffer the effects of that lost hour. These effects can be anything from lapses in performance, concentration and memory, to fatigue and daytime sleepiness.

Some studies have indicated that the impact of losing an hour of sleep can also be more serious than just feeling a little out of sorts. Research has shown that there is a slight increase in road traffic accidents in the days after the clocks go forward.

So, if you're someone who feels the effects of losing an hour's sleep, try the tips below to help adapt to the time change:

- Make bedtime a little earlier, just by 10 minutes or so, in the days approaching the clocks going forward.
- Stay in bed and sleep for as long as normal on Sunday morning. And make sure your bed is comfortable.
- Keep the bedroom as dark as possible.
- Create a sleep-friendly environment that enhances your chances of falling asleep, staying asleep and sleeping well. Set a cool temperature (around 18 degrees), eliminate distractions in the hours before bed, reduce your caffeine and alcohol intake and implement a good wind-down routine to help you relax (think a warm bath, a milky drink or reading a book).

If you can't sleep, don't lie there worrying about it. Get up and do something you find relaxing until you feel sleepy again – then go back to bed.



CHEST-A-MINUTE

'I'm really struggling in the mornings. I seem to get so breathless and it leaves me exhausted'

'I found that trying to get through my routine without a break was really taking its toll. Then I tried pacing myself by breaking my tasks up into manageable chunks'



- Think about taking your inhalers before you get on with anything else in the morning.
- Don't go straight for your wash after you get up, have a seat and a cuppa first!
- After a wash I put on a towelling dressing gown and have a seat. This leaves me almost completely dry without getting breathless or tired.

HOW TO REGISTER

Don't want to miss the next issue of Take a Breath! You can sign up to receive an e-mail alert that will let you know that the next issue is available, and a link to take you straight there!

Visit:

www.chss.org.uk/takeabreath-highland
for more information

New! Resources to help you live well



Living it Up in Highland

www.livingitup.org.uk is an exciting new digital service that has been launched in Highland. People in your community have helped to design it and they continue to shape it. It will help you find information and tools to enable you to stay happier, healthier and safer. There are 4 ways that livingitup.org.uk can help you:

DISCOVER will show you what groups, services and social opportunities are available locally.

FLOURISH provides information from trusted sources and tools and tips that you may find useful. It's a place where you can seek and share experiences from other people in the same situation as yourself.

SHINE If you have time on your hands, skills you'd like to make more of or an urge to learn something new Shine can tell you about opportunities available in your area.

CONNECT can help you learn new computer skills and find new ways to connect with family, your community and services.

Join us at www.livingitup.org.uk

Contact us at highland@livingitup.org.uk

Follow us on Twitter at LIU_Highland and Facebook/LiUhighland

HELP FOR BRONCHIECTASIS PATIENTS AND CARERS – A NEW WEBSITE

Bronchiectasis is damage to the airways which can lead to symptoms such as chronic cough, chronic sputum production and recurrent chest infections. It can also cause chest pain, tiredness and breathlessness. Correct and early diagnosis is essential. A good regime of self-management is also crucial in trying to slow further deterioration.



Clinicians at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh and members of the CHSS affiliated group 'Breathtakers – Action for Bronchiectasis' have developed a new website for people living with Bronchiectasis: www.bronchiectasis.scot.nhs.uk

The site provides reliable information on diagnosis and treatment. It shares advice and personal experiences from people with Bronchiectasis to help those living with the condition.

Can you find these hidden words?

WORDSEARCH

COWSLIP
POPPY
ORCHID
ASTER
IRIS
HONEYSUCKLE
ROSE
SWEET
WILLIAM
LILY
PRIMROSE
BLUEBELLS
WALL FLOWER
AQUILEGIA
BUTTERCUP
AFRICAN VIOLETS
SCOTCH THISTLE
DAISY
PEAT

S	V	F	C	O	W	S	L	I	P	X	W	Q	A
T	O	I	R	I	S	Y	P	P	O	P	V	B	M
O	D	A	I	S	Y	V	O	R	C	H	I	D	Q
C	H	O	N	E	Y	S	U	C	K	L	E	G	Y
K	V	R	O	S	E	G	T	R	D	S	L	J	B
W	I	L	L	I	A	M	T	E	E	W	S	L	W
E	O	S	P	R	I	M	R	O	S	E	E	G	V
B	L	U	E	B	E	L	L	S	S	E	U	Y	H
U	E	S	C	O	T	C	H	D	N	T	D	P	W
T	T	H	I	S	T	L	E	R	O	P	S	A	E
T	S	W	A	L	L	F	L	O	W	E	R	S	E
E	A	C	L	I	L	Y	H	P	E	A	T	T	D
R	A	A	Q	U	I	L	E	G	I	A	T	E	R
C	U	P	A	F	R	I	C	A	N	X	L	R	R

Extract from *The Activity Year Book: A Week by Week Guide for Use in Elderly Day and Residential Care* by Anni Bowden and Nancy Lewthwaite, published by Jessica Kingsley Publishers.



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or text **Nurse** to 66777