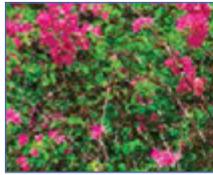


TAKE A BREATH



Chest-a-minute
Gardening



Weather Text
Alert



Travelling
with Oxygen

A Problem Shared...

One of Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland's affiliated groups in Kyle of Lochalsh carried out a survey in April asking its members how they managed their breathlessness and how their lung condition affects their lives. Here is a selection of the comments that were gathered. It can often be helpful to share a problem to hear how others deal with feeling breathless.

"I'm breathless at rest, can't walk far, the cold affects me, I am better in the summer and I can't go on holiday".
This person had TB as a teenager.

"I have had asthma for several years and take regular daily inhalers. The heat affects me, making my chest tight, I find I am better in the cold weather. Smoke from the coal/log fires affects me, I also have hay fever and I sleep with two pillows. I go on holiday every year and find I take my inhaler more often when I am in a hot country, I find it hard to walk on inclines, (much slower). When I visit our daughter I am much better as she lives nearly 7000 above sea level"

"I have had COPD for several years (previous smoker), I am not able to work as hard now (retired). Scents and ammonia (from hairdressers) affects me, as does cigarette smoke and high altitudes (it takes me a few days to adjust). I am not affected by weather but I take antihistamine tablets when the pollen count is high. I sleep with one pillow, I am not affected by holiday heat but my breathlessness does affect my mobility (worse on hills) so I rest more".

"I have had asthma and bronchiectasis for some years and regularly have chest infections. The cold and windy weather affects me, usually making me cough a lot & feel more breathless. Warm weather makes my chest tight, as



do chemical smells, cleaning fluids, hairspray, deodorant spray, diesel fumes and cigarette smoke. I can't walk very far at times because I feel very tired; I sleep for naps in the afternoons usually. I wake up at night coughing despite sleeping with 4 pillows, I do not go to hot countries, but can travel. I take more time when walking; walking on the flat can be okay if I rest regularly".

Thanks to Kally Leiper & Margaret Van Schaick for taking the time to carry out the survey and also to the entire group for sharing the comments.

Hopefully it has been interesting to hear about the issues that people have and how they cope with them. If you would like to share how your chest condition affects you or any more ideas on how to cope with the problems you have, please feel free to get in touch. See page 4 for contact details.

CHEST-A-MINUTE

"I do miss getting out in the garden at this time of year but all that bending down makes me far too breathless."

"You could get raised beds"

"I'm not talking about sleeping higher up!"

"No, I mean a raised flower bed or vegetable patch. It's on a raised platform so that you don't need to bend down as much. You can even sit beside it and do the gardening from there. It's much easier to reach so you don't become as breathless or tired. You can buy them pre-made from your local garden centre or get someone to build them for you"

"Oh, that's a good idea; I think I'll find out about that. It would be nice to enjoy my garden again without feeling so puffed out."

AIR QUALITY & WEATHER TEXT ALERT SYSTEM

Often a number of environmental factors such as dust, smoke or humidity can cause irritation to your lungs and increase the chance of

your condition worsening. At this time of year in particular, pollen levels can also cause a problem. Controlling your environment can help reduce the number of exacerbations you experience and help prevent the worsening of chronic conditions. We cannot change the weather but you can at least be prepared for what it brings!

Do you find that that adverse weather conditions or poor air quality affect your breathing? If you have a mobile phone you can sign up to our **free** Air Quality and Weather Text Alert Service.

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.



SPORTS SUMMER QUIZ

To get us in the mood for the up & coming Summer Olympics in Rio, here are a few sports related questions in this edition's quiz. Answers on page 4.

- 1 How often are the Olympic Games held?
- 2 Which sport has a Milk Race?
- 3 How far do you run in a marathon?
- 4 Who ran the first 4 minute mile?
- 5 Who won 7 Olympic gold medals in 1972?
- 6 What is the penalty awarded for a horse refusing to jump?
- 7 When were the Rome Olympics held?
- 8 Can you name 3 sports with a referee?
- 9 Who was The Greatest?
- 10 When was the football league founded?

TRAVELLING WITH OXYGEN

This is one of the most common topics that our Advice Line is asked about at this time of year, so here's a simple guide to help those of you who are travelling this summer.

GENERAL ADVICE

- Take a letter from your doctor outlining your medical condition and a list of the medications that you use.
- Make sure you have travel insurance, it can save you having expensive medical bills & travel costs if you become unwell abroad.
- You are best to take enough medicines with you plus an emergency supply in case you become unwell or get delayed.
- You should have a valid European Health Information Card (EHIC). These are available free of charge from www.gov.uk/european-health-insurance-card. Please remember that this is not in place of travel insurance

TRAVELLING WITH OXYGEN

- You should not take your oxygen equipment out of Scotland, so if you are planning a journey or staying out with Scotland, contact Dolby Vivisol for more information – see details below.
- Plan ahead – make sure you give your travel company plenty of notice if you are taking oxygen with you.

FLYING

If you are planning to fly and you require oxygen on board then you will need to get medical clearance from your doctor.

This involves filling out a Medical Information Form (MEDIF). This can be downloaded from your airline's website or just ask your travel agent for one. If you are not sure whether you will require oxygen for the flight then ask your GP or Practice Nurse about getting an assessment done. It is advisable to complete this well in advance of your date of travel.

Each airline has its own policy regarding oxygen but most will provide it for the flight, check with your airline as there may be a charge for this. You will also need to plan having oxygen for travel time on the ground, consider transfers, connections & delays.

USING OXYGEN IN THE CAR

Make sure that you inform your insurer, however this should not make a difference to your premiums.

Ensure that the oxygen is stored securely in the vehicle.

TRAVEL BY COACH

Travellers are permitted to carry their own oxygen hand held bottles on National Express coaches. Contact your travel company for details.

FERRIES

You will need to inform the ferry company of the fact you will be carrying oxygen at least 48 hours before you travel plus have a letter from your Doctor with details of your medical condition, as suggested under general travel advice.

RAIL TRAVEL

You will need to inform the rail company that you will have oxygen with you. They have limited spaces for wheel chairs (if needed) so you should book your space well in advance of travel. More information about rail travel can be found at www.railtravelmadeeasy.co.uk

CRUISING

Most cruise companies are very accessible. They require 4 weeks notice about the use of oxygen.

You need to arrange your own oxygen provision for the cruise. It is best to inform the cruise company of any oxygen requirements at the time of booking to help them co-ordinate any flights that may be included in your holiday.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Dolby Vivisol has a dedicated Holiday Service with a team of people to help you arrange the details for travelling with oxygen. Visit their website at www.dolbyvivisol.com or telephone them on Freephone 0800 833 531.

Take a look at the CHSS information factsheets on Holiday Information, Air Travel and Sympathetic Insurance Companies. You will also find helpful information about travelling with a respiratory condition on the My Lungs My Life website, simply visit www.mylungsmylife.org

Other helpful sites include:

- www.tourismforall.org.uk
- www.goodaccessguide.co.uk
- www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk

Happy Travels!

FRASER OPTICAL – IF YOU CAN'T SEE THEM, THEY CAN SEE YOU!

Here is some news about a great service that some of you may find useful. Fraser Optical in Beaully offers a special service to those who require eye examinations and optical care, but are unable to leave their home. Charles Hall the optician will come to your home and carry out the necessary examinations using purpose built equipment. This service is funded by the NHS if you are housebound or can't travel to an optician without considerable assistance.

If you are able to get to the optician yourself, then you could benefit from the disabled parking available as well as excellent services on offer. The test room and equipment available will also allow those of you who are in a wheel chair to access the same service as anyone else.

To find out if you qualify for the home service, book an appointment or ask for further details just call (01463) 782323. Please be aware that Specsavers do house calls for eye tests and hearing tests as well, just call your local branch for more information.

SIGNPOST HANDYPERSONS

Signpost Handypersons is a charity that helps individuals over 65 or those living with a disability to take care of small tasks in and around the home which may be difficult to do otherwise. Our coverage area includes Inverness, Nairn and Badenoch and Strathspey.

Signpost Handypersons can help with gardening, painting, small joinery jobs, repairing fences etc and many other things. We make a small charge for the work, to cover our costs.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION YOU CAN:

Visit our website

<http://signpost-inc.org/handy-persons>

Phone

01463 711393 (option 1)

Email

Tyla (Handypersons office assistant)
tyla@signpost-inc.org

Sandy (Handypersons manager)
hp.manager@signpost-inc.org

IPF

Do you or anyone else you know live with IPF or to give it its full name – Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis? If you have been diagnosed with this chronic lung condition then please get in touch. We would like to hear how your condition has affected you and what support you and your family have received.

Or do you want to know more about it and feel you can't find the information you need? Please let us know and we will try to help.

Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland is keen to support anyone affected by this condition. More information about IPF and new resources will be featured in the next edition of 'Take A Breath' newsletter.

GET IN TOUCH

You can contact our Advice Line Nurses on 0808 801 0899 if you want to find out more about IPF. Lines are open Monday to Friday; 9.30-4pm. Calls are free of charge.

You can contact us by email on respiratoryservices@chss.org.uk or give us a call on 0131 225 6963, or you can write us a note and send it to Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland, Rosebery House, 9 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh, EH12 5EZ.

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