

PULMONARY PUFFER'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
November 2017

Thanksgiving is coming this month-we hope that your holiday will be special and happy for you all!

The weather is certainly acting more like the fall now and with the cooler temperatures and darkness, some outside activities may be changing for a few months-hopefully you will be able to make the adjustment and keep enjoying your days and nights during the shorter days of this season!

Education: this month is actually to honor those living and those that have died with COPD

November is COPD awareness month in the United States. Orange is the color picked for COPD so you may see *go orange banners* or stickers in some hospitals or in advertising this month. November 25th is world COPD day!!!!

COPD is the 4th leading cause of death worldwide and 3rd leading cause of death in the US (>150, 00 people per year). 6.3% of the US population has COPD, 4.4% in VT, 5.9% in NH and 6.9% in Maine. It tends to kill more women than men. That is 16 + million Americans right now are living with this disease. About two thirds are under 65. Estimates are that 70% of COPD sufferers are still in the workforce and may not be aware of why they are having difficulty in their day or may be trying to keep working in spite of it. They estimate 15 million of those suffering don't even know they have it yet!

Every 4 minutes, someone dies from COPD. Nearly 1 in 5 patients, 40 years or older in US hospitals has a diagnosis of COPD. We are working hard to try to help people with COPD learn what they need to do to live longer, healthier, better and happier! There is more and more research going on for COPD and the anticipation is that there will be more options available within the next 10 years-I know that seems like a long time for many of you, but for so long, there was no research for this disease, so at last, people are trying to make a difference for all of you.

Smoking is not the only cause of COPD; second hand smoke, occupational dust and chemicals, air pollution and genetic factors can also cause the disease.

There are treatments available and they can really make a difference in especially control of symptoms and control of systemic effects. Pulmonary rehabilitation provides education, training and exercise as well as support and has been shown to help decrease hospitalizations, and assist COPD patients in managing the effects of their disease. Exercise has been shown to reduce the systemic effects of the disease, decrease shortness of breath, fatigue and improve the strength of the immune system and in some cases, slow progression of the disease. The right medications can make all the difference in the world, but with so many available, knowing how to use them is very important. Again, having that training is very important. The right therapy for the type of COPD at what stage you are in is important and there are international guidelines to follow to assist physicians in making these determinations.

For information on COPD awareness month, the COPD foundation has a lot of things going on for you this month from free patient webinars to information you can read or print out or pictures they want about your life with COPD. You can go to COPD foundation or visit copdf.co/Go-orange or [#goOrange](https://twitter.com/goOrange).

Here at pulmonary rehab, we just want you to know how much you all mean to us every day and all through the years, not just during this month!!

Our next meeting is Wednesday at noon on November 15th. For this meeting, I need YOU to also participate! I will discuss change and how due to disease, or age, we need to adjust how we do things, like the holidays for example. So, I would like to have examples from you about what changes you have made to your holidays due to your disease or age and how that affected you for the good or bad-and then we can talk about how that has made all of us feel-OK don't worry, we won't do a group hug at the end!!!

Mary Anne Riley, RRT, TTS