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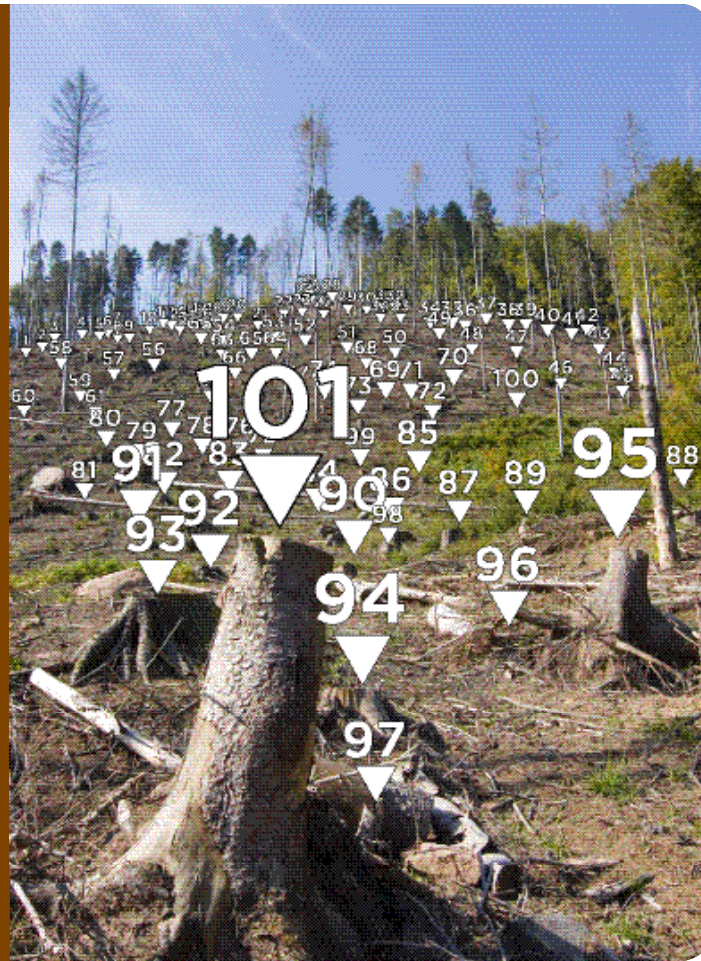
REASONS FOR SWITCHING TO PAPERLESS EOBs

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managing COPD™

fall 2009



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WHAT CAUSES COPD?

COPD affects about one of four smokers. Though smoking is a huge contributor to the disease, the following factors may also increase risk:

- Secondhand smoke
- Dust or chemicals polluting the air where you live or work
- Problems with lung growth and development
- Frequent respiratory infections

Some factors are out of your control; smoking is one you can control. Although you have COPD, you can do a lot to help keep it from getting worse.

Reference: "Understanding & Managing your COPD." Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

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Eight Steps That Can Make a Difference in How You Feel

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) refers to several types of lung diseases, and symptoms can vary from patient to patient. By following the eight steps below, you will be on your way to managing your symptoms and enjoying a better quality of life:

1. SEE YOUR DOCTOR.

When you have breathing problems, the sooner you see a doctor, the better. Chronic bronchitis is often neglected until it has reached an advanced state. Ignoring symptoms can harm your lungs and may lead to more serious respiratory problems or heart failure. See your doctor at least twice a year for checkups.

2. QUIT SMOKING.

Ask for help from your doctor. Medications, special gum, or skin patches may help you kick the habit. Set a date to quit, and tell your family and friends. Avoid places and people that make you want to smoke. Think about quitting one day at a time. Call 866-QUIT-4-LIFE to enroll in Quit for Life®, a private counseling program available to members*.



The content presented here is for your information only. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice, and it should not be used to diagnose or treat a health problem or disease. Please consult your healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns.

The information that is contained in this newsletter does not guarantee benefits. If you have any questions about your benefits or need to confirm your benefits, call Member Services at 801-442-5038 (Salt Lake area) or 800-538-5038.

UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING YOUR MOODS

You're not alone if you sometimes feel frustrated or helpless because you have COPD—especially if you aren't able to be as active as you once were. It's important to learn to manage your moods and understand what is causing feelings of frustration.

THINK POSITIVELY!

Change the way you look at your day by focusing on things you *can* do instead of things you can't.

DO YOU HAVE DEPRESSION?

We all feel sad or “blue” at times, but depression is more than that. Symptoms vary for everyone, but visit your doctor if you experience any of the following:

- Feel sad, nervous, or “empty” for a period of time
- Feel like things are hopeless
- Feel guilty, worthless, or helpless
- Lose interest in hobbies and activities you used to enjoy
- Have less energy, feel tired or “slowed down”
- Have trouble concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
- Have problems sleeping or oversleeping
- Lose your appetite and lose weight, or you overeat and gain weight
- Have thoughts of death or suicide
- Feel restless or irritable
- Have physical symptoms that don't respond to treatment like headaches, digestive problems, and/or long-lasting pain

Depression can be treated. Counseling, medicine, or both may help you feel better and improve your long-term physical health.

FIGHT WORRIES, STRESS, AND ANXIETY

You may worry about shortness of breath, lifestyle changes, and loneliness. Stress and anxiety use up energy you need to breathe. Find ways to deal with those energy-stealing feelings.

RELAX!

Try not to worry about future events that may not happen. Share your feelings and concerns about COPD with others. Get your questions answered. This may reduce your fears. You might also try yoga or calming breathing exercises.

Reference: “Living with Chronic COPD.” Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

Eight Steps continued

3. TAKE YOUR MEDICATION AS INSTRUCTED.

Ask your doctor to write down the name of each medication, how much to take, and when to take it. Bring a list of your medications to each checkup. Talk about how your medications make you feel to ensure the treatment plan is working properly.

4. KNOW WHEN YOU NEED TO SEEK HELP.

You should seek medical attention immediately if you experience any of these symptoms:

- It's hard to talk or walk.
- Your lips or fingernails turn gray or blue.
- Your heartbeat or pulse is very fast and irregular.
- Your medication only works temporarily, or it doesn't help at all.
- Your breathing is fast and hard.

5. KEEP THE AIR CLEAN IN YOUR HOME.

Keep smoke, fumes, and strong smells out of your home. If you must have your home painted or sprayed for insects, do it when you can be away until the odors subside. Cook in a well-ventilated area. Close the windows and stay indoors on days when there is heavy pollution or dust outside.

6. KEEP YOUR BODY STRONG.

Walk, exercise regularly, eat healthy foods, and learn breathing exercises.** Make sure your diet includes fruits, veggies, and proteins such as meat, fish, eggs, milk, and soy.

7. MAKE LIFE AS EASY AS POSSIBLE.

Do things slowly and while seated, if possible. Pick a place where you can enjoy activities and where others can visit with you. Find simple ways to cook, clean, and do other chores. Use a small table or cart on wheels to move things around. Wear loose-fitting clothing and shoes that aren't tough to put on. Keep things you use regularly in one easy-to-reach spot.

8. PLAN AHEAD IF YOU WANT TO GO OUT OR ON VACATION.

Go out during the time of day when you feel your best. Many people feel best right after they take their medicine. Plan to return home before your next dose of medicine. Avoid shopping during a busy time of day or places with lots of stairs. If you plan to travel far, or will be gone for more than a day, ask your doctor what to bring along in case you have problems. Take medications and phone numbers for your doctor and others who can help you.

*Your employer may choose not to cover this benefit. Call Member Services to confirm.
**Always speak to your doctor before you start an exercise program.

Reference: “Eight Steps to Manage your COPD.” FreeBreather. 2 Sept. 2009 <www.freebreather.com/copd/steps.asp> .

SEASONAL FLU VERSUS NOVEL H1N1: HOW TO STAY WELL

Influenza, commonly called “the flu,” is caused by a virus that infects the respiratory tract (nose, throat, lungs). As a result, people with respiratory diseases like COPD are more likely to have serious health problems, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

SEASONAL FLU VS. H1N1

So what is the difference between seasonal influenza and the new flu virus known as novel H1N1 influenza?

Seasonal influenza is the regular yearly influenza caused by two main types of flu virus: A and B. Novel H1N1 is a new strain of Influenza A virus that was first detected in March 2009. Since H1N1 flu is a new strain, most people don't have a resistance to it. This means that illness from this virus may spread more quickly. Asthma and COPD have been risk factors in 32 percent of reported hospitalized cases of H1N1 in the U.S.

Symptoms of the seasonal flu and novel H1N1 are similar, occur suddenly, and can cause aches, chills, cough, fever, headache, or a sore throat. Some individuals with H1N1 experience diarrhea or vomiting. Most healthy people recover from the flu without complications. But if you have a high risk condition like asthma or COPD, it is important to consult your doctor early for the best treatment.

HOW CAN I STAY WELL OR AVOID SPREADING THE FLU?

Both the seasonal influenza and the novel H1N1 are spread through exposure— mostly through coughs and sneezes, or touching surfaces that have been touched by a person sick with the virus. You can avoid getting the flu or spreading it by following these CDC recommendations:

- Avoid close contact with others.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough.
- Wash your hands often.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

One of the most effective ways to prevent influenza is through vaccination. Virus strains change constantly, which is why yearly vaccines are important. Annual vaccination for the seasonal flu began in September. Studies show that people who are at high risk for the flu are much less likely to be hospitalized or die during the flu season when they get a vaccination.

The seasonal vaccine is very effective, but it is still possible to contract the flu. Those who become ill after vaccination usually have a milder case.



The seasonal influenza vaccine will not protect you from novel H1N1 virus. However, it is still important to get a seasonal influenza vaccine to protect you from virus strains you could confuse with the H1N1 virus.

A vaccine has been developed against the novel H1N1 flu. Federal and local health officials have been asked to administer it to children and young adults ages 6 months to 24 years, pregnant women, individuals under the age of 64 with chronic diseases (like COPD), and caretakers and home contacts of infants (younger than six months), as well as healthcare workers. They will alert the public when it is available.

For more information about the seasonal or H1N1 flu visit www.cdc.gov/flu. Many vaccines are covered benefits with no deductible on most SelectHealth plans. Call Member Services to confirm your benefit details.

Reference: Tamara Lewis, M.D., M.P.A., M.P.H., Intermountain Healthcare and Shannon Spencer R.N., B.S.N., SelectHealth.

