

# NHOPA NEWS

National Home Oxygen Patients Association

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Volume 11, Number 10

October 2008

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## **COPD Awareness Month**

November is COPD Awareness Month 2008, sponsored by the US COPD Coalition. World COPD Day is November 19, 2008, organized by GOLD (Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease).

COPD or Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease affects 16 million Americans. According to the American College of Chest Physician's (ACCP) brochure *Living Well with COPD*, the term COPD is used by physicians to describe two different diseases, emphysema and chronic bronchitis. Many people have a combination of these two diseases. Additionally some people with COPD may also have allergic asthma or reactive airway disease.

The brochure defines these disease processes. "With emphysema, the air sacs (alveoli) and small airways (bronchioles) are damaged and lose their elasticity (if you think of the air sacs as little balloons, they are worn out and never able to return to their normal size). When you breathe out, stale air becomes trapped inside the air sacs. This makes it harder for fresh air (oxygen) to come in and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) to go out. The blood vessels around the air sacs are also damaged, which prevents fresh air (oxygen) from reaching the blood stream and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) from going out of the body."

"With chronic bronchitis, the airways (bronchial tubes) become swollen and inflamed and produce large amounts of mucus. The swollen tissues and mucus can make breathing difficult, because the inside of the tubes become narrow or closed in. The airways (bronchial tubes) often become easily infected, because it is difficult to cough out the excess mucus."

In conjunction with COPD Awareness Month and World COPD Day, The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI) has released

a national campaign titled *COPD Learn More Breathe Better*. This campaign, according to the NHLBI website, is "to increase awareness and understanding of COPD and its risk factors and to underscore the benefits of early detection and treatment in slowing the disease and improving the quality of life."

The NHLBI campaign cornerstone is the number 4. With COPD as the 4<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in the US, NHLBI recognizes 4 points one can do to live a longer, more active life. These include:

1. Be aware of the risk factors;
2. Recognize the symptoms;
3. Ask your doctor about a simple breathing test;
4. Follow treatment advice.

Capitalizing on the "4" theme, the NHLBI identifies 4 COPD risk factors.

- Shortness of breath, chronic cough, or trouble performing simple daily tasks like climbing stairs, grocery shopping, or laundry;
- Over age 40 and currently smoke or used to smoke;
- Worked or lived around chemicals or fumes;
- Certain genetic conditions.

If you feel you are at risk for COPD, there are 4 things you can do:

- Talk with your healthcare provider about shortness of breath, chronic cough, or decline in activity level;
- Get a simple breathing test or spirometry;
- Quit smoking. Need help? Talk to your doctor;
- Avoid pollutants or fumes that can irritate your lungs.

4 things to help manage COPD are:

- Take medication as directed by your doctor;

- Enroll in a pulmonary rehabilitation program;
- Avoid pollutants or fumes that can irritate lungs;
- Get flu and pneumonia shots as directed by your doctor.

November 13-16, the NHLBI is sponsoring "Learn About COPD Days." These 4 days help to springboard the *COPD Learn More Breathe Better* campaign. According to the website:

- **Thursday, November 13 and Friday, November 14 – Health Professional Outreach** - Partners in the healthcare community will present grand rounds, lectures, and seminars on COPD.
- **Saturday, November 15 – Community Outreach** - Partners will host screenings and presentations at community centers, shopping malls, health fairs, and other forums that touch those who are at-risk as well as patients and their caregivers in local communities.
- **Sunday, November 16 – Faith-Based Outreach** -Partners will host screenings and presentations held in conjunction with faith-based organizations and caregiver support groups.

Tools, resources and detailed information are available at:

[www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/lung/copd](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/lung/copd)

[www.goldcopd.com](http://www.goldcopd.com) has detailed information on

**National Home Oxygen Patients Association**

8618 Westwood Center Drive Suite 210  
Vienna, VA 22182-2222  
1-888-646-7244

ExecOffice@homeoxygen.org  
[www.homeoxygen.org](http://www.homeoxygen.org)

The National Home Oxygen Patients Association is devoted exclusively to improving the lives of people across the country who require supplementary oxygen on a regular basis.

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**Executive Committee**

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Robert Keith, Vice-President	Baltimore, MD
Secretary/Treasurer	Vacant

**Newsletter Editor**

Stephanie Diehl, RRT	Littleton, CO
stefmistr@aol.com	

World COPD Day.

To access the ACCP's *Living with COPD* brochure:

<http://www.chestnet.org/patients/guides/> and click *Living with COPD*.

Thanks to NHOPA Member Edna Fiore for this reminder!

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**Flu & Pneumonia Vaccinations**

It's that time of the year again – flu and pneumonia vaccinations (also known as the pneumococcal vaccine) are available.

**Flu Shots** - The Center for Disease Control (CDC) encourages those persons in high risk categories to receive a flu vaccination, which include:

- People who are 50 and older;
- Women who will be pregnant during the influenza season;
- Young children 6-59 months of age;
- People with chronic medical conditions such as asthma, emphysema, chronic bronchitis, bronchiectasis, tuberculosis, cystic fibrosis, heart disease, chronic kidney disease, diabetes or severe anemia;
- People who have diseases that depress the immune system or are receiving treatments for these conditions;
- Caregivers of high-risk individuals;
- Residents of long-term care facilities.

Flu vaccinations can be obtained from your physician or at a flu vaccination clinic in your area.

**Pneumococcal vaccinations** – This vaccine protects against 23 types of pneumococcal bacteria. People who should consider the vaccine include:

- People age 65 or older;
- People with chronic illness, such as heart disease, lung disease or diabetes;
- Have a weak immune system.

The pneumococcal vaccination typically lasts a lifetime, however the CDC recommends a second dose for those people 65 and older who received their first dose under age 60, or more than 5 years since that initial dose.

Check with your doctor regarding specific questions and about flu and pneumococcal vaccination availability.

at [www.myspace.com/oxybands](http://www.myspace.com/oxybands). Contact Dee directly at 740-348-5221 or via email at [oxybands@yahoo.com](mailto:oxybands@yahoo.com).

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### Online Caregiver Initiative

The NHOPA newsletter has several caregiver readers. Recently NHOPA member Edna Fiore alerted us to the new initiative by Medicare for caregivers. *Ask Medicare* recently updated their website to include online information, tools, and materials to assist caregivers in the healthcare decisions they face.

Millions of Americans provide daily care for chronically ill or aging family, friends, or neighbors. While it may go unrecognized, caregivers expend significant energy not only caring for the person but also wading through associated paperwork. Along with time, this requires energy and knowledge. Medicare has recognized this and has launched an online initiative that is part of *Ask Medicare* to assist caregivers. The site provides information and sources for topics such as *Help with Billing, Navigating Medicare, Care Options and Overwhelmed? Get Help*.

More information can be found at <http://www.medicare.gov/caregivers>

### New Products

***The following information on new products/companies available on the market is for informational purposes only. NHOPA does not specifically endorse ANY products. Contact your physician for further information regarding your healthcare or the specific company for product information.***

A NHOPA member reported that [oxyband.com](http://oxyband.com), a product and website previously referenced in this section is no longer available. In followup and in researching the web, we were unable to locate a distributor for this specific product. However, another source for the Oxyband product was located. Dee Weaver, who has a patent pending on Oxyband, has the product available in sizes for preemies to adults. She will also personalize colors if requested. Visit her website for further information and pictures

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### Try the Inogen One Risk Free for 30 Days

*Have you wondered about using a portable oxygen concentrator (POC)? NHOPA recently received an email from Inogen with the following information.*

Inogen is now offering an easy and risk free way to try the Inogen One Portable Oxygen Concentrator.

“You have heard about the Inogen One and how it can allow you to achieve independence and to eliminate the worry of running out of oxygen – now it is time to try the Inogen One so you can see the benefits for yourself. The 30-Day Risk Free Trial allows you to use the Inogen One for a full month – take it to your doctor, the grocery store, even on vacation – and if you don’t like it for any reason, Inogen will pay to have it shipped back. It’s that easy!”

The Inogen One is available Risk Free for 30 day trials directly from Inogen. Call **toll free at 1-866-517-6994** to learn more!

*As a reminder, only your physician can make changes to your oxygen prescription. If you want to change your oxygen flow rate or device your physician will need to verify that your saturation levels are adequate on the new device or flow rate. Changing from continuous flow to pulse is a change in prescription. Appropriate saturations need to be verified with rest and exercise as well as sleep where appropriate.*

### Early Holiday Present

Tom Williams of Strategic Dynamics has updated the portable oxygen (POC) concentrator comparison chart. As an early holiday present, the November issue of the NHOPA newsletter will feature this updated comparison chart. NHOPA thanks Tom Williams for giving permission to publish this important information.

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8618 Westwood Center Drive, Suite 210

Vienna, VA 22182-2222

**Updated NHOPA Website**

Take a look at the updated corporate sponsor page on the NHOPA website ([www.homeoxygen.org](http://www.homeoxygen.org)) – under membership. This page displays those corporations who support the mission and goals of NHOPA. Thanks to these corporate sponsors for their continued support and to the NHOPA Executive Office for this update.

*You are invited!*

Please join us for the  
**Annual NHOPA General Membership Meeting**  
Via Conference Call

**Date: Wednesday, November 12, 2008**

**Time: 11 am EST (10 CST, 9 MST, 8 PST)**

**Toll-Free Phone Number: Provided when registered**

Get a first hand update on the issues in which NHOPA is involved, to discuss issues that concern our members, and to learn about the 2008 election results

**To participate in the conference call, pre-register at one of the following;**

**Phone: 800.NHOPA.44 (800-6467-244)**

**Email: [ExecOffice@homeoxygen.org](mailto:ExecOffice@homeoxygen.org)**

**Mail: NHOPA, 8618 Westwood Center Dr., Suite 210, Vienna, VA 22182**

Participants wishing to have topics placed on the agenda should provide the NHOPA Executive Office with a written outline of the topic(s) no later than Tuesday, November 4, 2008. Once the agenda and plans for the call are finalized you will be provided with the toll free phone number and required access code.

◆ **For up-to-date information and membership applications go to [www.homeoxygen.org](http://www.homeoxygen.org)** ◆