

# Better Breathing

A publication of  
Breathe California  
of the Bay Area

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## Make Sure You're Practicing Good Lung Health this Holiday Season

Source: *Breathe California*

The holiday season conjures up visions of blazing Yule logs, frosted windows shut tight to keep out the winter chill, and dancing sugar plum fairies. While we hope all can enjoy this time with friends and family, it is important to remain aware of some of the hidden lung health risks around you. Thus, we would like to alert you to some of the dangers that many seemingly harmless winter traditions can present.

During the winter months, indoor air quality is usually much more susceptible to pollution. With windows shut tight, indoor air becomes more stagnant and harmful

particles can become trapped in your home. While wood fires can be perfect for a winter evening at home, they are the number one source of air pollution during the season. Cut down on harmful pollution by not burning wood this winter, converting your fireplace to natural gas, or at the least, by using adequate ventilation when you do burn wood in your fireplace. You should also listen for winter Spare the Air alerts which inform the public when air pollution levels are high. On these days, you should avoid having wood fires, refrain from exercising

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### Important Better Breathers Club Updates!

**San Jose** – Since our upcoming San Jose Better Breathers Club meeting is scheduled to fall on Christmas Day, we are canceling our December meeting. We look forward to seeing all of our SJ members on January 29<sup>th</sup> for our regularly scheduled meeting!

**Gilroy** – Breathe California is proud to announce that its Gilroy Better Breathers Club will now be hosted bimonthly (every-other-month). So, the club will meet in February, April, June, October and December in 2007 (the group does not meet during July and August). The meetings will still be held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday, however certain scheduling conflicts at St Louise hospital may force us to periodically reschedule. Keep an eye out for updates in this newsletter.

*For more information, call Breathe California at (408) 998-5865.*

## Remember Us During Your Workplace Giving Campaign

- **United Way**
- **Community Health Charities**
- **Local Independent Charities**
- **Combined Federal Campaign**

This fall, help Breathe California continue its fight against lung disease in all its forms. During your company's workplace giving campaign, designate your donation to Breathe California.

Assist us in our efforts to keep kids off tobacco, help smokers kick the habit, improve local air quality and offer critical assistance to those suffering from asthma, COPD or lung cancer. Plus, 100% of all gifts designated to Breathe California will remain here in our **local communities**.

For more information about designating your contribution to Breathe California, please contact Steve French at (408) 998-5865 or [steve@lungsrus.org](mailto:steve@lungsrus.org).

## Lung Health this Holiday Season...

*Continued from page 1*

outside and keep your windows closed to protect yourself from the poor outdoor air quality.

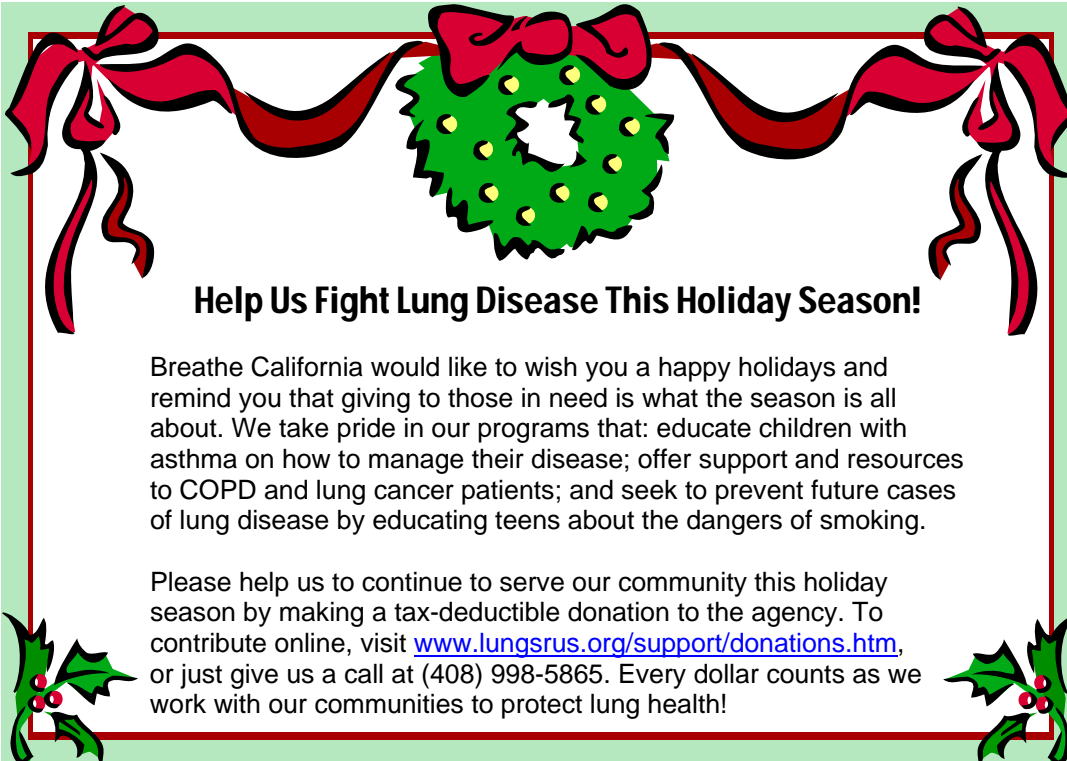
Metallic candles are nice, but can emit harmful fumes when they burn. Other sources of pollution include tobacco smoke, pet dander, hairsprays, cleaning products and air freshener fumes. Be aware of how materials and decorations in your home may be polluting your air, and make sure air circulates in and out of your home by opening your windows when you can during the daytime.

The changing weather can also pose problems, especially for lung disease patients. Cold air is a

common trigger for many people with asthma, so monitor yourself or your asthmatic child when the weather turns cold. In addition, damp weather can also facilitate mold growth in your home, another hazard to lung disease patients.

You should also do your part to keep the air free of the flu virus as well this winter. Get your annual flu shot and be sure to wash your hands often. If you aren't feeling well, rest and stay home to allow your body to fight the flu virus and prevent spreading the flu to others.

By following these guidelines you can do your part to help keep you and your loved ones healthy this holiday season.



### Help Us Fight Lung Disease This Holiday Season!

Breathe California would like to wish you a happy holidays and remind you that giving to those in need is what the season is all about. We take pride in our programs that: educate children with asthma on how to manage their disease; offer support and resources to COPD and lung cancer patients; and seek to prevent future cases of lung disease by educating teens about the dangers of smoking.

Please help us to continue to serve our community this holiday season by making a tax-deductible donation to the agency. To contribute online, visit [www.lungsrus.org/support/donations.htm](http://www.lungsrus.org/support/donations.htm), or just give us a call at (408) 998-5865. Every dollar counts as we work with our communities to protect lung health!

## In the News

Each month, we are proud to bring you some of the latest news affecting lung disease patients. You can also find more news briefs and articles online by visiting:

[www.lungsrus.org](http://www.lungsrus.org)

Click on the News link from the menu bar to reach our newsroom. From there, you can view individual articles by clicking on the "News Briefs" link.

From the Newsroom, you can also read about the agency's latest work in the community. Click on the "Agency News" link to view our latest articles and press releases.

*The following news briefs have been summarized from external sources and have been placed here solely to inform you of the latest in lung health news. Breathe California does not endorse their findings nor have they verified their accuracy.*

## Lung Cancer Breath Test in Development

*Forbes.com, November 12, 2006*

According to Forbes.com, new research has shown promise that a simple, non-invasive breath test could someday help predict who is suffering from or at a high risk of getting lung cancer.

The breath test was successful in finding "markers" that may indicate a high cancer risk, said senior researcher Dr. Simon D. Spivack of the Wadsworth Center, the public health laboratory of the New York State Department of Health. The test being developed asks subjects to simply breathe into a device for ten minutes. The device cools the air and forms a condensed vapor, which can be examined for chemical changes that are associated with

lung cancer as well as other forms of cancer.

While the development of the breath test is still in preliminary stages, researchers are hopeful that breath test technology will one day help doctors detect lung cancer cases earlier. According to the Lung Cancer Alliance, about 70 percent of lung cancer cases are diagnosed in the late stages, which is the main reason lung cancer remains the number one cancer killer of both men and women. However, if detected early, treatment options are more effective and up to 92 percent of patients can expect to live 10 years or more after diagnosis.

## CT Scans May Help Saves Smokers' Lives

*San Jose Mercury News, October 26, 2006*

According to the San Jose Mercury News, a new study has shown evidence that using chest scans to screen smokers for lung cancer can significantly increase survival rates.

Doctors have long shied away from using CT scans to detect lung cancer, feeling the process yielded too many false alarms and led to unnecessary biopsies. At present, many doctors still do not recommend their use to screen for lung cancer. However, according to a new study published in the New England Journal of Medicine, lung cancer patients whose early lung tumors

were detected by CT scans and removed had a 10-year survival rate of 92%. While the findings dwarf the 70% overall survival rate, there was no comparison group used to fully validate the claim that CT scans can effectively and consistently detect lung cancer.

As the usefulness of such scans continues to be debated, the researchers hold out hope that one day CT scans may be a tool doctors use to fight lung cancer much in the way mammograms are used to detect breast cancer.

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[www.lungsrus.org](http://www.lungsrus.org)

*As the Local Clean Air  
and Healthy Lungs  
People, Breathe  
California of the Bay  
Area fights lung disease  
in all its forms and works  
with its communities to  
protect lung health.*

## Upcoming Better Breathers Club Meetings

**Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 am to 12 noon – Gilroy**  
St. Louise Regional Hospital Board Room – 9400 No Name Uno  
Speaker: Colin Leeland, Advantacare  
*Tips and Tools to Help You Travel During the Holidays*

**Monday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm – Palo Alto**  
Avenidas Senior Center, 450 Bryant St.  
Speaker: Estelle Coleman, Breathe California  
*Celebrating a Lung Healthy Holiday Season*

**\*Note: Our SJ December meeting has been canceled due to the Christmas holiday.\***

### A Look Ahead: Our January BBC Meetings

Palo Alto – Monday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 pm to 3 pm  
San Jose – Monday, January 29<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 pm to 3 pm

*The Better Breathers Clubs meet at regular times and locations. They meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday in Palo Alto as well as on the last Monday in San Jose. In addition, the Gilroy Club meets on the 1st Thursday bi-monthly (Feb, April, June, Oct and Dec).*

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