



February 2006

# Better Breathing

A publication of  
the American  
Lung Association  
of Santa Clara-San  
Benito Counties

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Breathing online:

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

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## Announcing Our New Name: Breathe California

As many of you may have already heard, effective February 3, the American Lung Association of Santa Clara-San Benito Counties is ending its affiliation with the national organization and changing its name to **Breathe California**.

Rest assured that we will continue to host our monthly Better Breathers Club meetings in Palo Alto and San Jose as well as our quarterly meeting in Gilroy. We have had the pleasure of organizing lung disease support groups in our area for more than 30 years and vow to continue doing so.

While our name and affiliation is changing, who we are and the services which we provide are not. Throughout our 95-year local history, we have always focused on fighting lung disease and protecting lung health in our local communities. By becoming **Breathe California**, we can best ensure that we will be able to continue our tradition of providing innovative programs and quality patient services.

As such, we look forward to continuing to serve you by:

- Bringing you knowledgeable guest speakers from a variety of health disciplines
- Connecting you with new and

useful lung disease resources

- Offering recent and relevant information through both our monthly newsletter and website
- Advocating for the critical health issues that affect individuals suffering from lung disease

Furthermore, as **Breathe California** we will be able to improve on the many ways in which we serve you. As a locally independent agency, we will have the ability to rapidly respond to emerging lung health issues and other local needs in our communities. We will be able to focus all of our energies on work that takes place at the local level. We will also be rededicating our agency to its grassroots beginnings.

We are truly excited about this opportunity to improve the ways we serve our local communities. We hope you will join us as we become **Breathe California** and continue our search for ways to breathe easier and live healthier. You can continue to reach us by phone at (408) 998-5865, in person or via mail at 1469 Park Avenue, San Jose, CA 95126, and through the internet at [www.lungsrus.org](http://www.lungsrus.org). We welcome you to all us with any questions or comments about this change, and we look forward to seeing you at our next meeting!

## ARE YOU SUFFERING FROM CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE?

You may be eligible to take part in a research study if:

- You are at least 40 years old
- You have a diagnosis of COPD
- You are a current or ex-smoker
- You do not use oxygen for more than 16 hours per day
- You do not have asthma

You will receive investigational medication including an inhaler for your symptoms, study-related physical exams, laboratory tests, and financial compensation for time and travel.

**Please contact Marie Thompson at: 408.553.0709**

*Allergy and Asthma Associates of Santa Clara Valley Research Center*

## Around the Clock with COPD

### Volume 11 – To Bed

A publication of the American Lung Association of Connecticut

For the past year, *Better Breathing* has presented its readers with installments of the American Lung Association's "Around the Clock with COPD." They have been assembled from actual daily practice by members of the Respiratory Club, a support group for pulmonary patients and their families, jointly sponsored by the American Lung Association of Connecticut and Gaylord Hospital in Willingford, Connecticut. While this month we will be bringing you our final installment, we look forward to continuing to provide new and useful tips about how you can lead a fuller and healthier life.

### TO BED

- Go to bed in easy stages so that you arrive there relaxed, not worn out. For example, put on your night clothes and a comfortable robe, then read or watch TV for awhile.
- Plan your sleeping area so that everything you may need will be handy. The most important things are a light and a telephone. Have any emergency numbers you think you might need taped to the phone and make sure they're easy to read.
- Other helpful things include: a clock radio with an ear plug for late night listening if you have a

sleeping companion; medication as need be; a glass of water and a small snack if you are so inclined; and a urinal in a safe and easy to reach place. (Little known fact, there are also urinals made for women.)

- An electric blanket is a must. No other blanket is necessary. They are lightweight, comfortable, and make bed-making a cinch.
- A nightlight is a real necessity. It lessens the possibility of being disoriented if you happen to wake up suddenly and helps you locate things you may need in a hurry.
- There is now a light which projects the time on the ceiling and numerous small lamps which plug directly into a wall outlet. Watching a lava light may also serve to relax you and make you go to sleep. Best of all is a lighted aquarium which, in a darkened room, is absolutely enchanting.
- Some find this a perfect time to do some muscle relaxing exercises.
- Pull your night cap (no kidding) down over your ears, say your prayers if so inclined, and go to sleep.

## In the News

Each month we are proud to bring you some of the latest news in the world of lung health. To read these articles in their entirety, visit our online *Newsroom* at:

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

From there, you can click on *News Briefs* and read these and other news and be connected to the full-length versions of the articles.

## Looking for New Ways to Get Involved?

Have some free time on your hands? Are you looking to make a difference in your local community?

Become a VOLUNTEER!

We have many opportunities for you to become involved and help local residents breathe easier. Contact Patricia Tind at:

(408) 998-5865 or [patricia@lungsrus.org](mailto:patricia@lungsrus.org)

## Experts Predict Flu Season is Past its Peak

*Associated Press, 1/24/06*

State health officials believe that this year's flu season may have already hit its peak. While California experienced an unexpectedly high number of cases in December, the cases of influenza have decreased substantially over the past few weeks. In January, Kaiser Permanente reported a drop in flu cases from 184 during the first week to 94 in the second week. This represents a dramatic decline when compared to the 256 cases reported in Northern California during the last week of 2005. Officials speculate

that school holiday vacations in the end of December may have helped to prevent children from passing around the flu.

Although the flu season is not yet over, and the flu bug has been known to be unpredictable, health officials are optimistic. "Due to factors beyond our control, we escaped a major epidemic—for the time being, anyway," said Dr. Roger Baxter, a Kaiser Permanente infectious disease specialist.

## Family History Linked to Lung Cancer

*Reuters Health, 1/3/06*

While smoking has long been recognized as the leading cause of lung disease, new research suggests that genetics may play a larger-than-previously-expected role in the onset of lung cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and reduced lung function.

"Because cigarette smoking is such an overwhelming risk factor and preventable, the importance of family history and genetic susceptibility to lung cancer risk has been overlooked," said Dr. Ann G. Schwartz, a member of the research team from Wayne State University which analyzed scores of published studies on familial risks in lung cancer. In one study, their analysis found that of 26,000 patients with lung cancer, 14 percent had at least one first-degree relative with the

same disease. Furthermore, another 52 families had at least three relatives with lung cancer. The researchers also found that for those with a family history of lung disease, the average age of onset was 60 years old, compared with 70 years in the general population. The medical researchers also found studies suggesting a link between lung function, COPD and lung cancer and chromosomes 6 and 12.

"We are of the opinion that studies of spiral computed tomography (CT) screening and lung function testing are warranted in current or former smokers with a strong family history of lung cancer, particularly when the age at diagnosis of the family member is young," said Schwartz and fellow researcher Dr. John Ruckdeschel.

**American Lung Association of Santa Clara-San Benito Counties**

**Address:  
1469 Park Ave.  
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(408) 998-5865**

**Visit us on the Web!**

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

**Attention: the Gilroy BBC dates and time have changed!**  
Due to a scheduling conflict at St. Louise Hospital, in 2006 the Gilroy BBC will be meeting on the **FIRST Thursday** quarterly (March, June, Sep, Dec) from **11 am to 12 noon**. The meeting will still be held in the St. Louise Hospital Board Room.

## February Better Breathers Club Meetings

**Monday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 - 3:00 – Palo Alto**  
Avenidas Senior Center, 450 Bryant St.

Speaker: Janie Burkhart, Public Health Department  
Topic: Tuberculosis: Why you may be at risk

**Monday, February 27<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 - 3:00 – San Jose**  
American Lung Association, 1469 Park Ave.

Speaker: Janie Burkhart, Public Health Department  
Topic: Tuberculosis: Why you may be at risk

### SAVE THE DATE: March Meetings

**Thursday, March 2, 11 am** – St. Louise Regional Hospital, Gilroy  
**Monday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 pm** – Avenidas Senior Center, Palo Alto  
**Monday, March 27<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 pm** – American Lung Association, San Jose

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