

SAIL Home Oxygen Program

Tester's Newsletter

Spring 2015

Published by The Lung Association of Saskatchewan



Next **Home Oxygen Tester's Workshop** via Telehealth

Wednesday, September 16 at 13:00

Please sign up with your local Telehealth coordinator
48 hours before broadcast time

Asthma-COPD Overlap

Both asthma and COPD are obstructive lungs diseases affecting thousands of Canadians. Proper diagnosis is important since the treatment is different for each condition. Can people have both asthma and COPD? Unfortunately, yes. A [recent review article](#) published in Thorax online found that approximately 20% of patients diagnosed with either asthma or COPD actually had an overlap of both conditions. In the general population about 2% have asthma-COPD overlap syndrome (ACOS). People with ACOS have an increased health burden with more impairment, exacerbations, and hospitalizations.

How do we treat this condition? There are limited evidence based treatment recommendations because this subgroup of patients is usually excluded from clinical trials. In general, the addition of an inhaled corticosteroid to treat the asthma component is recommended. In the future, ACOS will become an area for further research.



New Oximeter

Nellcor has launched a new oximeter to replace the N65 model. The PM10N has several new features:

- ✓ It has a memory so patient data is not lost when the oximeter is off
- ✓ It can be downloaded to a computer through a USB cable
- ✓ A printout with the date and time for each SpO2 reading is available

If you are interested in a new oximeter, please contact James Sparks:

james.richard.sparks@medtronic.com

Are you putting your patient at risk?

There are three types of testing for SAIL home oxygen funding qualification: at rest, with exercise, and nocturnal testing. Physicians often order all three types of testing. This does not, however, mean that all three tests are necessary or can even be done safely. If your patient qualifies at rest for SAIL funding (SpO₂ ≤87% for two consecutive minutes) further testing with exercise or at night is not required and may even put your patient at risk.

There have been several instances of patients being profoundly hypoxic for far too long. In one case, the average SpO₂ was 73% for the entire night. If your patient has qualified for continuous oxygen therapy and nocturnal testing has also been ordered, please communicate that nocturnal testing is not required to Marion at the Lung Association. The patient's name will then be taken off the nocturnal testing waiting list.

As always, room air nocturnal testing is only done if the patient can tolerate the oxygen off for an extended period of time. Patients are also free to put their oxygen on during the test when they perceive that it is needed. They should record the time and the litre flow of the oxygen on the oximetry sheet that accompanies the oximeter.

If you have any questions or comments about testing procedures, please do not hesitate to contact Marion Laroque: marion.laroque@sk.lung.ca



It's Never Too Late to Quit

A [new study](#) from the Roswell Park Cancer Institute in Buffalo has found that lung cancer patients who quit smoking around the time of their diagnosis lived an average of 28 months. Those who continued to smoke lived an average of 18 months. Adding almost an extra year of life is a wonderful bonus for conquering a powerful addiction. It truly is never too late to quit.



Did You Know?

If your patient needs testing to re-qualify for exertional oxygen funding only, but they have had a recent exacerbation, the physician can request a two month extension by making a note on the SAIL renewal form. Testing can then be deferred two months, until they are hopefully stable.

There are now Five Home Oxygen Suppliers in Saskatchewan

[RANA Respiratory Care Group](#) launched home oxygen services in our province on June 15, 2015. They will provide home oxygen equipment and support, including portable oxygen concentrators, throughout the province. This is in addition to testing and support for sleep apnea clients which the company began in 2014. In the same way that people are free to choose a pharmacy, home oxygen clients are free to choose the supplier that best meets their needs.

\$120,000 for New Asthma Research in Saskatchewan

The Lung Association was able to fund three new asthma research grants in partnership with the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation. These one-year grants of \$40,000 each were funded equally by the two organisations. Grant applications were invited from across the province and reviewed by an expert panel. Only grants with a high ranking were funded. All three grants were made to scientists in the College of Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan who are conducting the following research projects:

Dr. Veronica Campanucci will study the role of a newly identified receptor in the lung in the inappropriate immune response that leads to inflammation of the lung airways in asthma.

Dr. John Gordon will investigate the ability of cells derived from bone marrow and loaded with specific allergens to switch off the cells that produce inflammation in the lung associated with asthma.

Dr. Joshua Lawson previously found approximately 20% of children living in urban areas have asthma compared to 14% among those living on a farm. He will measure dust levels and the components of the dust to determine the role of dust in explaining urban-rural differences in asthma rates.

Banning Menthol Cigarettes

On May 31, 2015, (World No Tobacco Day), Nova Scotia became the first jurisdiction in the world to ban the sale of menthol cigarettes. The Alberta government has also amended their previous laws regarding flavoured tobacco to include menthol. Adding menthol to cigarettes masks the tobacco taste and the harshness of smoke. The concern with all flavour additives is that tobacco products then become more attractive to our youth.

Unfortunately, our provincial government has adopted a 'wait and see' attitude towards banning these products. This is in spite of the fact that we have higher tobacco use rates than the national average.

For more on this subject, please read the Lung Association blog:

<http://blog.lung.ca/2015/07/update-on-flavoured-tobacco-products-in-saskatchewan/>



Home Oxygen Suppliers



<http://www.medigas.com/>



<http://prairieoxygen.ca/>



<http://pho2.ca/>



<http://www.ranacaregroup.com/>



<https://www.vitalaire.com/>