

# Better Breathing

A publication of  
Breathe California  
of the Bay Area

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## Tips to Handle Allergy Season

Sources: WebMD and About.com

While spring ushers in warm weather and blooming flowers, it also brings with it a nasty sidekick – allergies. While allergies have proven to be quite irritating for millions of people across the country, they can pose an even greater threat to people with lung disease. Because most lung disease patients’ condition can be exacerbated by seasonal allergies, it is crucial that they understand how to protect themselves from potential triggers such as pollen and dust mites.

Fortunately, there are several ways for individuals to help minimize allergy symptoms. One of the

easiest and most effective ways to reduce allergies is by maintaining a clean home environment. The following are just a few tips on how to prevent allergies from affecting you while in the home:

### Close all windows

Keeping windows shut at home and in the car prevents pollen from entering.

### Circulate inside air

Using an air conditioner and/or dehumidifier will keep air clean, cool, and dry. Re-circulating the air will eliminate any outdoor air.

*Continued on Page 2*

## Attention San Jose BBC Members: Date Change for May Meeting

With the Memorial Day Holiday just around the corner, we know many of you will have plans to join friends and family for an afternoon picnic or barbeque. So, the San Jose Better Breathers Club will be meeting one week early on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. With spring in full bloom, Breathe California associate Nick Saadi will be discussing: *What you need to know about seasonal allergies*. The meeting will be held at the regular time and location. We hope to see you there!

## ARE YOU SUFFERING FROM COPD?

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/day
- You do not have asthma

**Please contact Marie Thompson at:**  
408.553.0709

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

## Allergy Season...

*Continued from Page 1*

### Wash all bedding

Use hot water to wash blankets, sheets, pillowcases or comforters, to eliminate any dust mites.

### Use a dryer

Avoid drying clothes, bedding or curtains outdoors to avoid bringing pollen and/or mold into your home.

### Stay indoors

Minimize outdoor activities when your allergies are particularly severe to reduce pollen intake.

## Keep clean

Because pollen can be easily accumulated on skin and hair, it is important to take a shower after being outdoors.

These measures can be very effective in protecting you from allergies while in your home. Of course, you should consult your physician for alternatives if allergies are dramatically affecting your health. But, by simply making changes to daily home routines like those listed above, lung disease patients can enjoy the spring without having to battle the effects of seasonal allergies.

## Join Breathe California for the 2006 Clean Air Awards Luncheon!

Now in its 16th year, the Clean Air Awards Luncheon recognizes the many accomplishments made by local businesses, organizations and individuals to improve air quality around the Bay Area. Attracting many of the leaders in the local environmental arena, the luncheon allows for attendees to come together in search of new, innovative ways to clean the air we breathe. Keynoting this year's event is Dr. Robert Sawyer, prominent air pollution expert and newly appointed Chairperson of the California Air Resources Board. The event will be held on Friday, June 2 at 11:30 am at the World Trade Club in San Francisco.

Join Breathe California and help us recognize our local clean air champions! For event information, please contact Terry Lee at (650) 994-5868 or [terryl@ggbreathe.org](mailto:terryl@ggbreathe.org), or visit the event website at [www.cleanairawards.org](http://www.cleanairawards.org).

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

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

*From the Newsroom, you can also read about the agency's latest work in the community by clicking on the "Agency News" link.*

### **Gas Mixture May Help Reduce Shortness of Breath for COPD Patients**

*Medicine Plus, April 14, 2006*

Researchers in Britain have found that Heliox28, a 72 percent helium/28 percent oxygen gas mixture may help patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). According to the study of 82 COPD patients, the gas mixture contributed to improvement in the distance patients were able to walk as well as their endurance level.

Researchers conducted the study to explore whether certain gas mixtures

could be of greater benefit to COPD patients than normal oxygen supply. The researchers theorized that Heliox28 would help reduce airway resistance and improve respiratory gas exchange.

64 percent of patients reported less shortness of breath after having received the gas mixture and participating in a distance walk. The results also showed that the gas mixture yielded greater benefits for patients with more severe lung conditions.

### **Nicotine May Protect Cancerous Cells**

*San Jose Mercury News, April 3, 2006*

A study conducted by researchers from the University of South Florida has found that nicotine supplements may negatively affect chemotherapy for lung cancer patients by acting as a protective shield for lung cancer cells.

Although nicotine has not been shown to cause cancer, researchers tested three commonly used chemotherapy drugs to determine the effects caused by nicotine. Results from the study showed that nicotine increased the production of a pair of proteins, which in turn protected cancerous cells.

The results, which were presented at the American Association for Cancer Research's annual meeting, reaffirmed the danger facing lung cancer patients who continue to smoke. Yet, it also raised questions about whether lung cancer patients should employ the use of nicotine quitting-aids.

"The best thing is to stop as soon as they can," said Srikumar Chellappan, one of the lead researchers. "They should avoid nicotine in all forms, not just smoking," he added, "but that is easier said than done."

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**Better Breathing**  
is a publication of:

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of the Bay Area  
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San Jose, CA 95126  
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[www.lungsrus.org](http://www.lungsrus.org)**

*Fighting Lung Disease  
in All Its Forms and  
Working with Our  
Communities to  
Protect Lung Health*

## May Better Breathers Club Meetings

**Monday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 to 3:00 – Palo Alto**

Avenidas Senior Center, 450 Bryant St.

Speaker: Nick Saadi, Breathe California

Topic: What you need to know about seasonal ALLERGIES

**Monday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1:30 to 3:00 – San Jose**

Breathe California, 1469 Park Ave.

Speaker: Nick Saadi, Breathe California

Topic: What you need to know about seasonal ALLERGIES

*\*The San Jose BBC will meet one week early due to the Memorial Day Holiday\**

## SAVE THE DATE: June Meetings

**Thursday June 1<sup>st</sup>, 11 am – St. Louise Regional Hospital, Gilroy**

**Monday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 pm – Avenidas Senior Center, Palo Alto**

**Monday, June 26<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 pm – Breathe California, San Jose**

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