

Rx briefs

Grief series

St. Joseph Mercy Hospice is offering a five-part grief support series on five consecutive Thursday evenings beginning May 29. Each weekly session will be held 7-8:30 p.m. at the Education Center Exhibition Room at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital. Pre-registration is required.

The series will help people who have lost loved ones adapt to the loss and develop new skills in coping. The series offers participants healthy ways to move through the grief process and provides support, understanding and friendship to those who may believe they are alone with their feelings of grief.

The goals of the group are to understand how grief affects you physically, emotionally, and spiritually; learn to deal with difficult emotions such as anger, guilt and loneliness; learn to take care of yourself and reinvest your energy; and to take steps to reconcile with grief, and grow because of it.

The series is open to the public at no charge. It is recommended that participants attend all five sessions. To register, call St. Joseph Mercy Hospice at (734) 327-3409.

A second five-part series will be offered 7-8:30 p.m. Tuesday beginning July 15 also at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital.

USO fund-raiser

Farmer Jack Food Market has launched a storewide fund-raiser to support the United Service Organizations (USO) through Memorial Day, May 26. Farmer Jack will match customer donations (up to \$15,000) from its stores in Michigan and Ohio.

One dollar donation flyers will be available near check-out registers at all Farmer Jack Food Market and Food Emporium stores. Customers interested in donating simply fill out a flyer and give to the cashier. The flyers will be displayed prominently at the front of the store to show Farmer Jack and its customers' support for the USO.

On May 31, at the Detroit Tiger's home game against the New York Yankees, Farmer Jack will announce the grand total raised during the fund-raiser at a pre-game ceremony. Farmer Jack will also give away 10,000 Farmer Jack baseball hats to children 14-years-old and under.

"Thousands of American troops remain overseas and Farmer Jack wants to show its support in their continuing efforts," said Mike Corlier, president of Farmer Jack Food Market. "The USO provides much-needed relief to the men and women serving away from home and for that, we are proud to help support its mission and programs."

The USO provides morale-boosting programs and services to enhance the quality of life for military personnel and their families stateside and overseas.

A private, non-profit organization, the USO relies on donations from individuals and corporations to support such programs and services as Operation Phone Home, cyber cafeterias, family and community centers, mobile cafeterias and deployment centers.



Asthma and Exercise

It doesn't have to take your breath away

BY JENNIFER KENNEDY
CORRESPONDENT

Most people expect to get a little winded when they exercise, regardless of their fitness level. However, for some, it can mean shortness of breath, tightness in the chest, coughing, and wheezing, which can hinder the continuation of the exercise, or even daily activity.

People who experience these symptoms could have chronic or exercise-induced asthma. Does this mean they should avoid exercise altogether? Doctors say no, aside from the most severe cases of asthma.

"Exercise can be a trigger for asthma, but with proper diagnosis, precautions and treatment, most asthmatics should be able to exercise regularly and safely," said Dr. Clyde Flory, board member of the Michigan Chapter of the Allergy and Asthma Foundation of America, located in Southfield.

What is asthma?

Asthma is an inflammatory lung disease in which muscles surrounding the airways tighten, become swollen, and clogged from membranes secreting extra mucus, blocking air passages. The results are often difficulty of breathing, coughing and wheezing. Although there is no cure for asthma, it can be controlled.

More than 18 million Americans, or approximately 7 percent of the population, are reported to suffer from asthma. With strenuous physical exercise, most of these individuals experience asthma symptoms.

What is exercise-induced asthma?

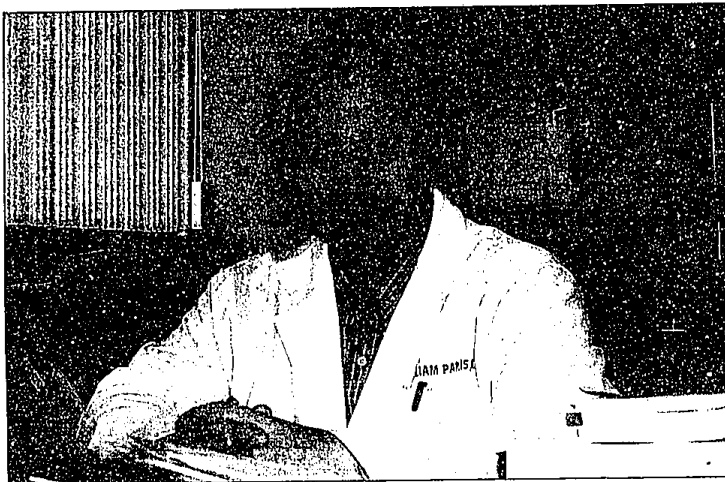
Exercise can sometimes trigger symptoms in people with asthma. However, for some individuals, exercise is the main trigger. This is called exercise-induced asthma (EIA), or exercise-induced bronchospasm (EIB). As we exercise, we breathe faster and the body's natural response is cooling of the airways, said Flory.

"The airway cooling will cause bronchospasms in some people," said Dr. S. William Paris, of Paris Allergy and Asthma Centers, located in Livonia and Farmington. Depending on the time of the year, cold, dry air or certain allergens can also be the cause.

"There are two phases of EIA, one phase that occurs early on, within 10 minutes of exercising, or a late phase response in which the individual experiences difficulty of breathing shortly after exercise has stopped," said Paris. "Either phase can be controlled with medication."

What is the treatment for EIA?

Like the treatment of chronic asthma, the key to treating EIA is proper diagnosis



Dr. William Paris advises that exercise is good for asthma patients.

and pre-treatment. By taking medication before exercising, narrowing of the airways can be avoided. For individuals with EIA, a variety of medications may be used. Some of the medications most commonly used are bronchodilators, like albuterol or formoterol inhalers. They can be used as a preventative measure, or as quick-acting relief, but it is important to consult your doctor to learn what works best for you.

"Steroidal medications are typically only prescribed to chronic asthmatics whose asthma is out of control enough, or more severe," said Flory.

Are there other triggers?

Asthma can be either physically induced, or allergen-induced, said Paris. In this case, immunotherapy (allergy shots) may also be an option for treating allergen-induced asthma. Some common allergens are pet dander from dogs or cats, ragweed pollen, dust mites and molds.

"This time of year tree pollen and molds are high, which can trigger wheezing," said Paris. "An individual can be exposed to allergens, be exercising and start to wheeze. The shortness of breath could be due to the allergens or the exercise."

Or, if an individual has a cold or even a

respiratory or sinus infection, shortness of breath can result.

Should I stop exercising?

Don't stop exercising, said Flory. Many people, including global leaders, famous celebrities and athletes like Greg Louganis (Olympic diver) and Dominique Wilkins (NBA basketball player) have asthma and exercise regularly. "Exercise of any kind improves the body's oxygen uptake efficiency - lung capacity, or amount of oxygen you can consume - and improves the lungs' exertion capability. This is true for asthmatics, or anyone," said Flory.

What exercise is best?

Swimming, said Flory and Paris. Although, any type of exercise should do your body good when your asthma is under control. Exercise should be a part of everyday life for all asthmatics.

If you think you may have asthma or exercise-induced asthma, by educating yourself about medications and other management strategies, you can control it and live an active life. Even if you are not striving for an Olympic medal or a World Championship, you should be able to exercise to your full potential with appropriate diagnosis and treatment from an allergy and asthma specialist.

ASTHMA INFORMATION SOURCES

For more information on chronic asthma or exercise-induced asthma, contact the following sources:

■ Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
(800) 7ASTHMA

■ American Lung Association
(800) LUNG-USA

■ American Academy of Allergy and Immunology
(800) 822-2762

■ American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology
(800) 842-7777

■ Allergy and Asthma Network/Mothers of Asthmatics Inc.
(800) 878-4403

Livonia Rotary hosts 'last polio victim' in Americas

Until now, Luis Fermin, the last polio victim in the Americas, is a child most have only seen through photographs and videos. However, that changed a few years ago when Rotarians of District 6400 had the opportunity to meet Luis at the District Conference in Traverse City. Luis has been the inspiration behind much of the District's polio eradication efforts.

Luis visited the Livonia Rotary Club on Monday, May 12.

Luis was born to poor peasants who lived in abject poverty in the remote Peruvian mountains of Pichanaqui. In 1991, at the age of 3, Luis was diagnosed with polio by a visiting Rotarian doctor.

Two years later, Luis was spotted by Rotarians in Lima. He was unable to attend the local school because of paralysis and other medical conditions. Peru's National PolioPlus Committee offered to assist Luis, and with his parents' blessings, brought him to live in Lima, which held better prospects for a child with disabilities.

"Luis is a great symbol of the struggle for polio eradication," said Gustavo Gross, past RI director and president of the polio eradication fund-raising campaign (PEFC) effort in Peru and Ecuador.

"I take care of his education and health program," said Gross, who, along with his wife, Dorit, act as surrogate parents to

Luis. "At present, he has teachers in the areas of language and psychological therapy, pedagogical help, and physical rehabilitation."

Part of the cost of Luis' treatment and studies is being met with the help of U.S. and Canadian districts. For the Rotary year 2002-2004, District 6400 has "adopted Luis."

While Rotarians are on the drive to eradicate polio throughout the world, Dave Carpenter of the Wayne Rotary Club has volunteered to chair the Luis Fermin Fund.

"I don't think we should forget those that Rotary didn't get to in time," he said. "Luis is not only a symbol of the help

needed by polio victims, but he is also a real live person in need."

District 6400 has committed to support Luis through the next two years. Carpenter hopes to raise \$24,000 to pay for physical therapy and additional operations. A club member or another individual could "sponsor" a week of Luis' care for \$250 or a month for \$1,000, he said.

Luis puts a human face on the Rotarians polio eradication program and demonstrates the need to assist those who the Rotary Polio Eradication program was too late to reach. For more information, contact Bill Fried of the Livonia Rotary Club, at (734) 421-8055.