



Take a deep breath—if you can

By Shirlee Rose Iden
staff writer

Cigarettes, perfume, plastics, asbestos.

For Dr. Bruce Dubin of the Center for Asthma, Emphysema and Allergic Disorders in Southfield, this litany of lethal compounds spells the greatest trouble for his patients.

His newly opened center for those with pulmonary disorders treats patients from a few months old to those past 80.

Smoking is by far the number one menace, he says.

"It's not a place to walk into like most offices or clinics, wait around and get an prescription and leave," he says. Treatment at our center is holistic. We work with families from every aspect of their lives.

"Our task is to help people experience daily living even with obstacles."

Carol Vick, director of pulmonary rehabilitation at the center, a native Detroit, recently had a shopping list that included two pairs of knee socks and panty hose for the center.

"We'll use them to teach patients hard of breath to practice getting dressed."

"SO MANY times, patients tell us they don't even change clothes unless someone changes them because they lack the physical strength."

For Vick, whether patients can dress, lift groceries or bend over to put on socks, is a real concern.

Vick was graduated from the University of Michigan and completed a special program for respiratory therapy graduates at Washtenaw Community College.

Dubin, who lives in Farmington Hills, also grew up in Detroit.

"When I was 10 I wanted to be an electrical engineer, but by age 13 I knew I would be a doctor."

After graduation from Eastern Michigan University he attended medical school in Kirksville, Md. after which he did a residency in internal medicine and a fellowship in allergy, immunology and obstructive lung disease at the National Jewish Hospital in Denver.

For Vick and Dubin, dealing with patients whose fear, anger, frustration and struggle to breathe are a day to day battle. "Many want only to die," Dubin says.

Recently, his agenda has included planning a seminar and retreat for those over 83 who need to share information on how to live with chronic illness.

PATIENTS need input on the sexual aspects of their problems and also every day things like how to shop for prescriptions, Dubin says.

"For teen asthmatics, we've tailored programs and they need them because they feel different."

"If they take prescription drugs, they are tempted by kids who accuse them 'are you doing drugs?'"

The center's teen group is called the A team. Dubin and Vick expect to be establishing an outward bound program for teens soon, similar to one Dubin directed in Battle Creek.

"Kids feel safe in places like that because everyone has asthma," he contends.

For asthma patients, there is no cure, only control, the doctor says, and no assurance of immunity.

"I've had attorneys come in at age 33 unable to speak or work with adult onset of asthma. These are ailments that hit every age group and just one in a family changes everything."

FAMILY meetings are a principal activity at the center, according to Vick.

Dubin believes the main benefit of holistic treatment is that patients become more aware of themselves as consumers. His hope is that physicians will see they need a total kind of treatment to make their struggle for breath worth while.

Asthma likely has strong familial tendencies, but the cause is not really known, Dubin says. "Also the environment is important and certain viruses may play a role."

"A man in a factory is different from a six-month-old wheezing child, but we can help them both and they can help themselves."

"One of my goals is to keep patients out of hospitals which are a terrible place to be when you're sick," he says.

"I also like to keep patients off drugs like cortisone, and to work on programs to help people stop smoking."

Phone number at the center is 335-2370.



Linda Hawkins (above) breathes into the complete pulmonary function analyzer which measures air passing in and out of the lungs. Carol Bell-Jesion, chief respiratory technician at the Southfield center for Asthma, Emphysema, and allergic disorders (right) instructs Hawkins to take a deep breath and hold it.



Staff photos by Camille McCoy

Space designer opens closets

It happens about twice a year — the great closet exchange.

That's when, as the new season approaches, your summer clothes get put away and the winter things come out of moth balls. It's a job no one likes or looks forward to.

Closets never seem to have enough room to store everything. When changing clothes from one site to another, something always pops up that you forgot to wear or have been looking for all season.

Remember that yellow camisole that looked so great with all your summer suits? You couldn't find it until too late.

We've all experienced the "closet blues." Now organizing space has become almost a science. There are right and wrong things to do to help even the smallest space become arranged so that things may be more easily found.

We talked to West Bloomfield's Jane E. Smitt — known as the Closet Queen. A "space designer" for about five years, she began by designing kitchens.

She discovered that what people wanted most was efficient use of the space they had. She graduated from kitchens to her own business when one of her clients, who happened also to be an interior decorator,

asked her to perform her organizational magic on a closet instead of a kitchen.

"I make the best use of space from a functional standpoint," Smitt says. "I have organized and arranged closets, laundry rooms, pantries and offices in addition to kitchens."

Her favorite job is redoing a closet. She personally loves clothes and admits to being part clothes horse. Because of her interest in fashion, she understands the importance people place on their wardrobes.

WHEN JANE E. SMITT gets down to brass tacks, she begins with a consultation to see what a client's needs are. Then she measures and counts the items in a wardrobe from accessories to blouses or shirts.

Sometimes redoing a closet will involve contractors and cabinet makers and an electrician. She feels a woman's closet is usually more of a challenge because of all the accessories.

Jane's philosophy is that nothing should be behind doors. Everything should be out to be seen and used.

"I think a person should have total visibility of a wardrobe," she says. All men's neckties should be visible, she says, and every



Margery Stearns Krevsky

woman's belt and necklace should be available at their fingertips.

West Bloomfield's space designer also believes in hanging things together by season. Divided compartments, boot hangers, belt racks and circular necklace hangers are part of her organizational repertoire.

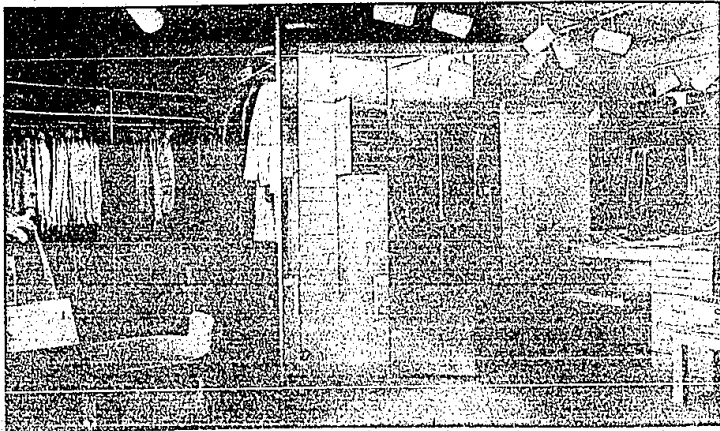
Presently, she is taking on some interesting challenges. "I was called to organize a yacht recently," she says.

"This 110-foot floating summer home will be outfitted with plastic materials instead of metal because of the rust factor. Also, because boats have small cabins, I have to make use of every single inch."

Jane believes organization can add time to a busy lifestyle. Once you've had it done, you won't be able to live without it, she believes.



Jane E. Smitt, space designer (above), shows (left) everything open to be made accessible closets a science. The seen and used, ultimate closet as created by Smitt has no.



Staff photographs by Stephen Centroll