

New COPD Patient Education Tool Available Online

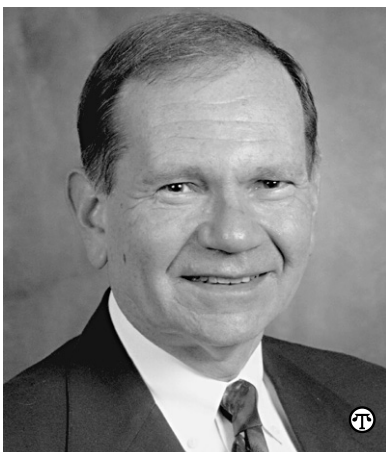
(NAPSA)—The American Lung Association announced today the introduction of a new free Internet-based lung health decision-support tool for patients suffering from COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease), a smoking-related illness commonly known as chronic bronchitis, emphysema or “smoker’s lung.”

The COPD Lung Profiler™ is a user-friendly interactive Web-based tool that confidentially matches an individual’s clinical information to a carefully selected group of peer-reviewed clinical studies. As a result, patients receive personalized information about treatment options and side effects relevant to their condition, along with helpful questions to discuss with their doctors. The site can be easily accessed by going to www.lungusa.org and clicking on the COPD Lung Profiler icon.

“I don’t use a computer very often, but found the COPD Lung Profiler very easy to use and the information it provided to me was extremely helpful,” said Elizabeth Donnelly, a COPD patient from Edison, New Jersey, who walks a mile each day and maintains an active lifestyle. “With the questions provided to me, I was able to speak to my doctor, so he could provide me with the right diagnosis and treatments for my personal health.”

Because many COPD patients want to maintain their privacy, the American Lung Association believes the COPD Lung Profiler will be an effective tool to assist with discussion between the patient and physician.

“COPD is an illness that many patients prefer anonymity when seeking information,” said Dr. Norman Edelman of the American Lung Association. “The COPD Lung Profiler allows them to thoroughly research and understand their own personal situation, so they can make educated decisions about treatment choices. With so many undiagnosed COPD patients in America, the COPD Lung Profiler will be a great asset to those seeking information in a private manner.”



Dr. Norman Edelman of the American Lung Association.

COPD is the nation’s fourth leading cause of death with approximately 119,000 Americans dying each year as a result of this respiratory disease. COPD is the only one of the top ten illnesses on the rise and more than 726,000 COPD patients are hospitalized each year due to exacerbations—a severe COPD attack when patients struggle to breathe. And, according to a recent study from the Centers for Disease Control, the number of women diagnosed with the disease has surpassed men.

“Smoking is a physical addiction which makes quitting very difficult,” said Dr. Edelman, who recommends smoking cessation as the first step for COPD patients. “The information offered to patients through the COPD Lung Profiler may provide an additional motivator to help them quit smoking and seek treatment from their physician, which is the best thing they can do for themselves.”

COPD is a slowly progressive disease, not presenting any obvious signs or symptoms until many patients have reached their middle age—40s. And many of those who do experience symptoms—like shortness of breath during a walk or climbing stairs—will reduce the level of their activities, so those symptoms disappear. The problem is the disease is still there. To combat this, the American Lung

Association recommends that anyone who has ever smoked should visit their doctor and ask for a lung function test, known as a spirometry test.

“Anyone with a smoking history, who notices a constant nagging cough, excess mucus production or shortness of breath after mild exertion may have COPD and should see their doctor,” said Dr. Edelman.

The American Lung Association is introducing the COPD Lung Profiler in November, which is COPD Awareness Month. The designation, which is supported by President George W. Bush, was made to raise awareness across the United States for this devastating disease.

The COPD Lung Profiler technology was developed by NexCura, a Seattle-based healthcare education and information company that develops proprietary, Internet-based, clinical knowledge applications for patients, caregivers and providers to facilitate communication and promote better informed decisions about treatment options and care. The COPD Lung Profiler was underwritten by a grant from Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

The American Lung Association has been fighting lung disease for nearly 100 years. With the generous support of the public and the help of volunteers, the non-profit organization has seen many advances against lung disease. However, the work is not finished. As they look forward to their second century, the Lung Association will continue to strive to make breathing easier for everyone through programs of education, community service, advocacy, and research.

The American Lung Association’s activities are supported by donations to Christmas Seals and other voluntary contributions. You may obtain additional information at the American Lung Association Web site at www.lungusa.org. The American Lung Association does not endorse products.