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Did your patients
get their flu
and/or pneumovax
vaccine?

Smoking cessation and oxygen therapy are the only treatments shown to increase life expectancy for people with COPD. Below are the GOLD recommendations for initiating oxygen therapy.

Oxygen Therapy

Indications....

- $Pao_2 \leq 55$ mmHg
- $Sao_2 \leq 88\%$

Or

- Pao_2 55-60 mmHg
- $Sao_2 \leq 89\%$
 - Pulmonary hypertension
 - Peripheral edema suggesting congestive heart failure
 - Polycythemia ($HCT > 55\%$)

Long term oxygen therapy is started usually in Stage IV: very severe COPD patients. Oxygen therapy increases survival if used > 15 hours/day.

Oxygen therapy improves:

- Hemodynamics
- Polycythemia
- Exercise capacity
- Mental State

Continued from November's Issue....
Medication Management

Glucocorticosteroids

- Regular treatment with inhaled glucocorticosteroids (ICS) is appropriate for patients with an FEV₁ <50% predicted and repeated exacerbations (i.e., 3 in the last 3 years).
- *ICS combined with long-acting B₂ agonists is more effective than individual components.*
- **Long term treatment with oral steroids is not recommended in COPD.** In addition a side-effect of long term therapy contributes to steroid myopathy, which contributes to muscle weakness, decreased functionality and respiratory failure in patients with advanced COPD.

Combination Products for COPD

Combivent® - Salbutamol/Ipratropium (Albuterol & Atrovent®)

- This inhaler uses two short acting bronchodilators; one is a beta-agonist (Albuterol) and the other is an anticholinergic (Atrovent®)
- People with peanut or soya lecithin allergies should not use any Atrovent® product.
- If someone is on Spiriva® which is another anticholinergic, Atrovent® or Combivent® should be discontinued. Albuterol should be maintained as a “rescue” medication.

Advair® - Salmeterol/Fluticasone

- This inhaler combines a long acting beta-agonist bronchodilator (Salmeterol) with an anti-inflammatory/corticosteroid (Fluticasone).
- People with COPD should also have a fast-acting inhaler (like Albuterol) available for acute symptoms.



Next Month.....

- Exacerbation... What is it?
- Can Pulmonary Rehab help?