

Please take a few minutes to read this month's report on **Pneumonia Care**. You'll soon discover why Licking Memorial Hospital is measurably different ... for your health!

Visit us at [www.LMHealth.org](http://www.LMHealth.org)

The Quality Report Card is a publication of the LMHS Public Relations Department. Please contact the Public Relations Department at (740) 348-1572 to receive future mailings.

The articles contained in this publication should not be considered specific medical advice as each individual circumstance is different. Should you need medical advice, consult your physician. Entire publication copyrighted 2010 Licking Memorial Health Systems. All rights reserved.



**Quality Report Card**  
**Licking Memorial Health Systems**  
(740) 348-4000 (phone) • [www.LMHealth.org](http://www.LMHealth.org)

Volume 11, Issue 11 November 2010

## Health Tips - How to Protect Your Lungs

The average adult takes approximately 20,000 breaths each day. With each breath, the lungs add oxygen to the bloodstream, and the oxygen is carried to every part of the body. If the lungs are damaged, the entire body suffers, so it is extremely important to keep your lungs healthy. Here are some proactive tips to protect your lungs from damage and disease.

- 1. Do not smoke, and if you already smoke - stop.** Licking Memorial Health Systems offers free smoking cessation services through the Quit for Your Health program. Call (740) 348-QUIT (7848) for more information. New client sessions will begin in November.
- 2. Receive an annual flu vaccine.** Complications from influenza (flu) can lead to pneumonia. The seasonal flu vaccine is very effective in preventing the disease. By preventing sickness in yourself, you are also helping to protect the health of your family and others around you.
- 3. Receive a pneumonia vaccine if recommended by your physician.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends the vaccine for many people with chronic illnesses, children under the age of 3, and adults over the age of 65. A single dose of the vaccine is also recommended for older children and younger adults.
- 4. Avoid exposure to harmful fumes and pollutants, including second-hand smoke.** Limit the use of toxic household sprays and have your home tested for radon gas exposure.
- 5. Wash your hands frequently.** Good hand-washing is the most effective way to prevent the spread of infection. If you do become sick, be diligent about washing your hands and any surfaces you touch to avoid spreading germs to others.

## Pneumonia Care - How do we compare?

At Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS), we take pride in the care we provide. To monitor the quality of that care, we track specific quality measures and compare them to benchmark measures. Then, we publish them so you can draw your own conclusions regarding your health care choices.

Check out our Quality Report Cards online at [www.LMHealth.org](http://www.LMHealth.org).

- 1** National pneumonia treatment guidelines recommend that the first dose of an antibiotic be given to pneumonia patients within six hours of arrival at the hospital. This "door-to-antibiotic time" also includes diagnostic testing.

	LMH 2007	LMH 2008	LMH 2009	National <sup>(1)</sup>
Patients receiving antibiotic dose within 6 hours	96%	98%	97%	94%
	LMH 2007	LMH 2007	LMH 2009	National <sup>(2)</sup>
Average door-to-antibiotic time	162 minutes	143 minutes	141 minutes	162 minutes

- 2** Best practice in pneumonia care says that a blood culture should be collected before any antibiotics are given to a pneumonia patient to more accurately determine which microorganism is causing the pneumonia.

	LMH 2007	LMH 2008	LMH 2009	National <sup>(1)</sup>
Patients receiving blood cultures prior to antibiotics	98%	97%	96%	92%
Pneumonia patients given the most appropriate initial antibiotic	85%	87%	85%	88%

- 3** Hospitalized patients with a condition that puts them at risk for developing complications from pneumonia and/or influenza (flu) should be screened for vaccines while in the hospital and receive a pneumonia and/or influenza vaccine, if appropriate.

	LMH 2007	LMH 2008	LMH 2009	National <sup>(1)</sup>
Pneumonia patients screened for the pneumonia vaccine	95%	96%	95%	86%
Pneumonia patients screened for the influenza vaccine	92%	91%	94%	85%

- 4** Licking Memorial Health Professionals (LMHP) office patients who are at high risk for these illnesses are also screened and vaccinated as appropriate. The physicians receive updated information on which populations are at most risk, so it is important for patients to follow their advice.

	LMHP 2007	LMHP 2008	LMHP 2009	National <sup>(3)</sup>
Physician office patients over 65 years receiving the pneumonia vaccine	88%	87%	88%	69%
Physician office patients over 65 years receiving the influenza vaccine	81%	80%	79%	70%

- 5** LMHS is committed to providing and encouraging free, easily accessible flu vaccines to all employees. In order to provide safest care to our community, LMHS recognizes the importance of keeping the staff healthy.

	LMHS 2007	LMHS 2008	LMHS 2009	National <sup>(4)</sup>	LMHS Goal
LMHS employees receiving the influenza vaccine	56%	77%	85%	62%	greater than 80%

**Data Footnotes:** (1) [Hospitalcompare.hhs.gov](http://Hospitalcompare.hhs.gov) national benchmarks. (2) MIDAS comparative database from fourth quarter 2009 data comparing more than 525 organizations. (3) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Prevention and Control of Seasonal Influenza with Vaccines. Recommendations of ACIP, 2010. (4) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Interim Results: Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Coverage Among Health-Care Personnel. MMWR April 2, 2010/59 (12); pages 357-362.

# Patient Story – Susan Gasser

After recovering from her second bout of pneumonia, 51-year-old Susan Gasser of Granville hopes she never has to battle the illness again. An experienced registered nurse, Susan knows the importance of immunizations and hand-washing in disease prevention, and she urges her friends and family to be diligent in protecting their health, too. However, as Susan learned first-hand, immunizations do not provide 100 percent protection, and she is grateful that Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) was there to provide excellent care when she contracted the serious disease.



Susan Gasser (right) enjoys frequent walks in the Granville area with her daughter, Regina, and her pet dogs. Susan has found walking to be a good exercise to rebuild lung health after her recent bout of pneumonia.

Three months after being released from LMH, Susan returned for a follow-up CT scan of her lungs, and Dr. Pacht assured her the pneumonia had been resolved. She still wonders why she contracted the disease twice even though she has never smoked, and had received a pneumonia vaccine and yearly flu shots. “Sometimes I think I may be more susceptible because of second-hand smoke,” she stated. “My father smoked heavily when I was growing up. My sister has also had pneumonia even though she is also a non-smoker.”

In August 2006, Susan had just begun a new job in Newark when her daughter, Regina, came home from summer camp, feeling unwell after being sick at the camp. Susan recalled, “The camp nurse said that Regina had an upper respiratory infection. Then I began to feel symptoms. Finally, I got to the point that I could not catch my breath. My sister ended up calling the ambulance to take me to the Emergency Department at LMH, and I was diagnosed with pneumonia. I stayed in the Hospital for several days, and then was released home with several antibiotics and an inhaler.”

At work, Susan had seen how devastating pneumonia can be, but was still unprepared for experiencing it, herself. “I had an elderly patient in a nursing home once who coughed so violently that she broke a rib. I have seen what pneumonia can do, but I was really frustrated by how long it took for me to recover. After I left the Hospital, I thought I would bounce right back, but it took at least one month to feel like myself again.”

This past spring, Susan consulted with her family physician, Jason Winterhalter, M.D., of Cherry Westgate Family Practice, because she had been frequently choking on food, and a long-existing enlargement on her thyroid gland seemed to be growing larger. Dr. Winterhalter recommended that she have the growth removed, and so she had the surgery at a Columbus hospital in April. “It seemed like I never recovered,” Susan said. “I was coughing so hard that I almost passed out. After one week, I called my sister. She came over and drove me to the Emergency Department at LMH. They performed a CT scan, and Dr. Pacht (Eric Pacht, M.D.) diagnosed me with both bronchitis and pneumonia.”

This time, Susan was able to return home after an overnight stay. “Again, it took about one month to fully recover,” she remembered. “My daughter is my hero – she would come home from school and make something for me to eat. I do not know what I would have done without her. It was really hard for her to see me going through that, especially since my husband died in 2003 from melanoma. It brought back bad memories for her and scared her to see me that sick.”

While she was in the Hospital and recovering afterward, Susan found great comfort in the capable care she received. “I had really good care at LMH and was impressed both times. I also have a lot of confidence in Dr. Pacht and Dr. Winterhalter. They both listen carefully to me and explain things to me clearly.”

Susan advises her friends and family to receive an annual flu immunization and a pneumonia vaccine if they are in an elevated risk group, as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention. “The vaccines have been proven to be very effective in preventing disease,” she explained. “I urge everyone to do anything they can to prevent a case of pneumonia.”

By mid-summer, things had improved for Susan and Regina. Susan has returned to spending time with her seven dogs and taking weekly walks to downtown Granville to shop at the Farmer’s Market, while Regina has entered Wittenberg University as a freshman.

The CDC recommends the pneumonia vaccine for individuals over the age of 65 years. In addition, adults younger than 65 years are urged to receive the immunization if they smoke, have a suppressed immune system, or have a chronic disease, such as diabetes, HIV, or asthma.

Complications from influenza, commonly called the flu, can lead to pneumonia, so patients who are at risk for developing pneumonia are also urged to receive annual flu shots. LMH is offering the seasonal influenza vaccine at the LMH Flu Clinic, located at the Indian Mound Mall in Heath, near Entrance B. The Clinic is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., October 5 through November 30 (closed Thanksgiving Day). The cost is \$25 by cash, check or credit card. The LMH Flu Clinic also accepts Medicare or Medicare HMO, traditional Medicaid or Medicaid HMO (Molina or Caresource) or MedBen Insurance. No appointment is necessary. For more information, please call (740) 348-7091 for a pre-recorded message.

# Patients Can Breathe More Easily with LMH Respiratory Services

Licking County is blessed with clean, high-quality fresh air; however, some residents are not able to enjoy the feeling of taking in a deep breath. Chronic lower respiratory diseases, such as emphysema, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma or pulmonary fibrosis, are prevalent in the U.S. A 2008 report released by the Ohio Department of Health cited this category of illnesses as the fourth leading cause of death in Licking County. Chronic lower respiratory diseases are also among the most significant risk factors for developing pneumonia. Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) has two services, Respiratory Therapy and Pulmonary Rehabilitation, that help patients with breathing problems lead more enjoyable lives by strengthening their lungs.

LMH Respiratory Therapy is aimed primarily toward diagnosing, treating and managing inpatients’ pulmonary disorders. The department is staffed by Pulmonologist Eric Pacht, M.D., and licensed respiratory care therapists. Among other services, the Respiratory Therapy staff provides oxygen therapy to patients of all ages, administers nebulizer medication for patients with diseases, such as pneumonia or emphysema, manages ventilator usage, and assists in diagnosing sleep apnea. In addition, the respiratory therapists educate patients on ways to manage their conditions and improve their lung function.

Dr. Pacht also supervises LMH Pulmonary Rehabilitation, and services are available to outpatients with stable, chronic lung disease, upon their physician’s referral. The program focuses on strengthening patients’ lungs and improving their breathing. The licensed therapists may include oxygen treatments, medication and breathing exercises to lessen the effects of lung disease. In addition, the patients are provided education about nutrition and exercises that will benefit them.

“We cannot erase the lung damage that has already occurred from chronic lung disease,” Dr. Pacht explained, “but we can greatly enhance our patients’ futures. By strengthening their

lungs, our patients breathe better and feel better, and they are more active for a longer time. Stronger lungs are also more capable of fighting off complications, such as pneumonia. We have had great success in promoting our patients’ health with these services.”

LMH’s Respiratory Therapy is located on the Hospital’s second floor, and it is staffed 24 hours every day to be available to inpatients at all times. The Pulmonary Rehabilitation Department is located in the Cardiology Department on LMH’s first floor. Appointments can be made through the patient’s primary care physician, or by calling (740) 348-4191.



Gus Howarth receives encouragement from respiratory therapist Rita Allen, R.C.P., C.R.T., as he exercises in the LMH Pulmonary Rehabilitation center. LMH’s Respiratory Therapy and Pulmonology Rehabilitation services can help patients with chronic breathing problems enjoy more active lifestyles.

## LMH SEASONAL FLU CLINIC

Have you received your flu shot this season?

Licking County residents 18 years of age and older are invited to attend the clinic. Parents of children needing flu vaccines should contact their pediatrician or primary care physician.

**When**  
8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Tuesdays and Thursdays  
October 5 through November 30  
(closed Thanksgiving Day)

**Where**  
Indian Mound Mall in Heath,  
located near Entrance B

**Cost**  
\$25 by cash, check or credit card. LMH also accepts Medicare or Medicare HMO, traditional Medicaid, or Medicaid HMO (Molina or Caresource) or MedBen Insurance

**For More Information**  
Call (740) 348-7091 for a pre-recorded message about the Licking Memorial Hospital Seasonal Flu Clinic

**Licking Memorial Hospital**