



CARD NEWS

Center for Asbestos Related Disease

www.libbyasbestos.org
(406) 293-9274

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New Types of Research are Coming to Libby...

- Focus groups only involve talking...
- \$40 in Libby Bucks will be provided for your time
- Read the BIG CARD NEWS for more details...

The Difficulty of Diagnosing

-Tanis Hernandez,
CARD Social Worker

Diagnosing asbestos related diseases associated with Libby amphibole asbestos is difficult because it is a new presentation of an old disease.

The initial changes appear more subtly and are not as easily recognized on diagnostic images (x-rays and CT scans) in the early stages. When people are experiencing symptoms, the changes on the images may be read as “shadows” or “fat” when really they may be the early signs of Libby amphibole asbestos disease. It is also important to remember that with Libby amphibole disease the changes might actually be on the outside lining around the lungs (pleura) rather than inside the lungs.

It is easy for doctors

Black and Whitehouse to identify these changes because they read thousands of x-rays and CT scans every year with these specific types of changes. A good analogy I heard recently is related to those pictures where you are supposed to find 8 animals hidden in the picture. If you know there is a lion, a hippo, a giraffe, etc; it is much easier to find the animals. Same goes with radiographic changes associated with Libby amphibole asbestos disease.

The DLCO (diffusion capacity) has also been identified as a good tool to measure how much Libby amphibole asbestos disease is affecting someone. This test measures how much oxygen travels from your lungs into your blood stream and to the rest of your body. If someone has a low DLCO they will experience symptoms such as shortness of breath and fatigue.

You may have heard about this before as it is an important area of debate in the senate FAIR bill. (Fairness in Asbestos Injury Resolution Act of 2005) It is important for all of us because the “*Libby Fix*” in the bill intended to help people in Libby needs to include the DLCO as a measurement tool. Sometimes the DLCO is the best reflection of how impacted a person is with Libby amphibole asbestos disease. We are lucky that both of our Senators are fighting for this to be included.

Overall the most important thing is a face-to-face medical evaluation with a treating physician with some understanding of Libby amphibole asbestos disease. It is important for a doctor to correlate symptoms with the finding of all of these diagnostic tests, including the x-rays, CT scans, and pulmonary function tests including the DLCO.

Gift of Hope: Community Blood Draw

A big “THANK YOU” to community members and volunteers who made the CARD’s first community-wide blood draw for asbestos research a success. We had 54 people give blood to 3 different projects: the MARF project (which is looking to refine a blood marker for mesothelioma), the UM genetic study, and the UM autoimmune study. More people turned out than we ever imagined which shows the interest and support for research in our community. In fact, there was another 21 people who came to the event and were requested to pre-register and return to CARD when it was less busy. CARD draws blood for research projects during regular business hours and if

you happened to miss this exciting event, drop by the CARD any time Monday thru Thursday (closed from 12 noon – 1:30 pm for lunch) and we would be glad to enroll you. *ALL* participants are welcome! Even people without asbestos exposure or disease. CARD is appreciative of the community’s support and learned a lot from this first event. CARD will be offering quarterly blood draws and other research events to increase awareness and provide the opportunity for participation in important research projects that will help the community, medical providers, and the nation to better understand Libby amphibole asbestos disease. *“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it’s the only thing that ever has.” -Margaret Mead*

Understanding CARD Billing and Funding

Talking about money is never fun for any of us, but on the other hand it’s important to discuss it so we all understand why things are the way they are.

Due to changes in the medical benefits offered by the Grace Libby Medical Program administered by Health Network America/Triveris (HNA) and the guidelines that govern Libby Asbestos Medical Plan (LAMP), the Center for Asbestos Related Disease (CARD) will now need to bill other insurances if claims are refused by HNA and LAMP. These programs are independent of CARD, thus we have no control over the decisions they make or how they choose to provide benefits.

CARD regrets to make this change, however CARD receives no funding other than billing for patient services. The dollars CARD receives for research can only be spent on activities that are specifically for research...**not** patient care. In order to keep CARD in our community as a specialty clinic for asbestos related disease, it has become necessary to utilize all insurances available to patients.

CARD accepts HNA and LAMP payments as full payment for services. However, other medical providers (for example, all other medical facilities in and outside of Libby) will make their own decisions regarding if they will accept HNA and LAMP payment as full payment or will balance bill you. CARD is always willing to make a payment plan specifically for you that meets your individual needs.

Based on the type of insurance benefits you have you will fit into one of these categories. This is the order your bills will be submitted.

- **If you have Medicare/Medicaid:**
 - 1) HNA
 - 2) LAMP
 - 3) Medicare
 - 4) Supplemental Insurance
 - 5) Medicaid
- **If you have Private Insurance:**
 - 1) HNA (Grace Medical Plan)
 - 2) Private Insurance
 - 3) LAMP (Will not pay balance that remains from private insurance) **Contact LAMP for assistance in paying deductibles** and they also offers other supplemental benefits.
- **If you have no insurance:**
 - 1) HNA
 - 2) LAMP
- **If you receive annual screening benefits or check ups through LAMP or HNA your benefits should not be affected**

Remember, HNA and LAMP only cover medical services related to Asbestos Related Diseases associated with the exposure that occurred in Libby, Montana.

If you have specific questions about HNA benefits or denied claims call 1-888-563-1564 or for questions about LAMP benefits call 1-877-889-8405.

Energy Essentials

-by Ashley Day,
CARD Respiratory Therapist

Living with an asbestos-related disease can often times have a serious impact on a person's ability to function independently. With extreme fatigue and shortness of breath doing every day tasks can become difficult. Energy conservation is defined as making tasks easier to accomplish in a timely, organized fashion to decrease the amount of energy required during a task. There are several energy conservation techniques available to minimize breathing difficulty.

First and foremost you need to have a plan. Evenly distribute harder tasks throughout the week, and decide what time of day is YOUR best time of day and do the more strenuous activities including exercise then. Use labor saving techniques like soaking the dishes before washing them or pushing things across the floor rather than carrying them.

Another important part of energy conservation is prioritizing. Decide what jobs are most important and accomplish those first. Perform activities sitting if possible such as folding laundry sitting on the couch. Organize your workspace. Avoid reaching, bending, carrying, and climbing. Delegate some tasks to other people if possible. Learn to let go of guilt caused by not finishing a task. There are other days!

Pacing yourself is an essential part of conserving energy. Alternate easy and difficult tasks, and take frequent rest stops during a task. Work with gravity assisting, not resisting. Do not rush and, get plenty of sleep. Rest an hour after meals because it takes a lot of energy and oxygen to digest meals!

Using correct body mechanics as you do all activities in life will help you conserve energy. Correct body mechanics include; keep the head and neck aligned with the trunk and tuck the chin, keep shoulders and hips in alignment, move your feet when turning around, maintain a pelvic tilt by tucking in your buttocks, have one foot elevated on a low stool or step when standing, bend your knees and keep back straight when lifting a low object, keep objects close to your body while lifting or carrying, and inhale when extending arms and exhale as arms come back.



Energy conservation can help people avoid the downward spiral of inactivity.

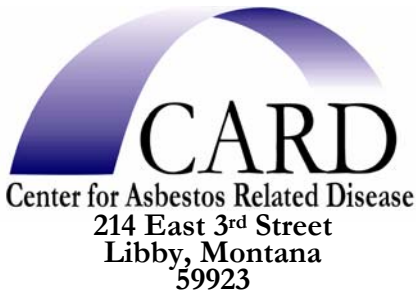
If energy conservation techniques are used wisely a person can avoid the dangerous spiral of inactivity. The downward spiral starts when a person first feels short of breath

from moderate exertion. Then they avoid certain activities to control or avoid shortness of breath. This lack of activity causes muscles to weaken, and weak muscles use more oxygen than strong ones. Soon they feel short of breathe from mild exercise, and then they avoid other activities that make them feel short of breath. As the body weakens further, they become short of breath when doing every day activities such as bathing and showering.

Walking is a good easy way to start when trying to avoid the spiral of inactivity. With walking you use many of the muscles in your body, including your heart. With gradual exercise, the muscle fibers become shorter, thus needing less oxygen. It increases circulation, which means more oxygen going to the rest of the body. Walking uses your whole body and helps to improve your overall endurance level. It allows you to enjoy other daily and recreational activities.

So start conserving energy today to be sure you have some tomorrow! The benefits are extremely beneficial to your well-being, and certainly essential when trying to accomplish every day tasks. HNA does provide free memberships at the Montana Athletic Club. If you are concerned about energy conservation or want to talk with someone regarding specific things you can do for your individual situation you may contact Ashley Day at 293-9274 extension 31 or ashley@libbyasbestos.org.

If you have questions or comments about this newsletter, or would like to receive it by mail:
Contact Tanis Hernandez at the CARD: tanis@libbyasbestos.org or 406-293-9274 x29.



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THE BIG CARD NEWS

Karmanos Focus Groups Need All Types of People to Participate! (Not just CARD patients)

We need your help?

Discussion group participants needed for a research project to better understand issues related to asbestos exposure. You will participate in a small group discussion only. You will not be asked to provide blood or other biological samples. Refreshments will be served and each person who participates will receive \$40.00 in Libby Bucks.

If interested please call Cheryl Roediger (extension 27) or Tanis Hernandez (extension 29) at the CARD (406) 293-9274. For additional information about this study call 1-800-KARMANOS and ask for extension 8289 or extension 8703.

This study is sponsored in part by the Centers for Disease Control, Karmanos Cancer Institute, Wayne State University and the Center for Asbestos Related Disease.

***SPREAD
THE
WORD!***
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***Get
Family
and
Friends
Involved!***
.....
***Different
points of
view are
important!***