



CARD NEWS

Center for Asbestos Related Disease

www.libbyasbestos.org
(406) 293-9274

Inside this issue:

Understanding Mesothelioma Biomarkers	1
Symbicort/Influenza	2
Funding/GoodSearch	2
What Is Resiliency?	3
CARD Research Plays Important Role	4

Smoke-Free For Life!

The next six week quit smoking series begins in mid-January. Contact CARD to sign up!

Smoke-Free For Life Monthly Gatherings are also available the 1st Monday of every month. Call CARD for more information.

Research Leads to Understanding of Mesothelioma Biomarkers

Libby, Montana, along with communities in France, Australia, and Turkey all came together through the work of Dr. Harvey Pass at New York University. This collaborative effort was to work towards developing an early detection screening tool, SMRP, for mesothelioma (meso). Meso is a specific cancer involving the lining around the lungs (pleural lining), abdominal cavity, or heart. Its only known cause is asbestos exposure. SMRP could be used as an annual screening tool for at risk populations, provide earlier identification and intervention for meso, and also serve as a monitoring tool for recurrence in patients who have undergone treatment for meso. Biomarkers are highly sensitive tools that can identify disease long before there is any x-ray evidence.

From September of 2005 through September of 2007, over 550 Libby community members participated in the biomarker project, with nearly 300 of these volunteers giving a second sample during year two of the project. The Libby community wowed the research community with their willingness to participate to make this research project a huge success! THANK YOU EVERYONE!

The project done at CARD in cooperation with Dr. Pass was funded by

MARF (Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation) and focused on the specific biomarker SMRP. SMRP is a protein made by mesothelial cells and demonstrates significantly higher levels in individuals with meso and ovarian cancers. Our involvement helped to better understand the normal range of SMRP levels in the blood and urine of people exposed to Libby amphibole asbestos and also for people with no significant asbestos exposure. Our “normals” were compared to different populations to understand what the normal range should be for this screening tool.

On October 5, 2007, Dr Pass presented his preliminary finding at the MARF annual conference. It appears that 3 biomarkers might be used in combination for the desired mesothelioma screening tool. These are: SMRP, Osteopontin, and MMP9. There is still more preliminary research that must be done before this screening tool is available for routine use in medical clinics. However, the work done with the Libby community has brought us one step closer to making this happen. This is of great benefit to our community members and to all people across the nation and world who have been exposed to asbestos and are at high risk of developing mesothelioma. Finding an early detection marker is a high priority because with most cancers, early detection and treatment interventions usually result in much improved outcomes.

Symbicort

Symbicort is a new respiratory medication that involves budesonide and formoterol. Budesonide is an inhaled corticosteroid which decreases inflammation in the lungs which can decrease chest tightness and wheezing. Formoterol is a long-acting bronchodilator which helps relax the muscles around the bronchial tubes thus further decreasing wheezing and shortness of breath. Symbicort does not relieve sudden symptoms; it must be taken as directed over a period of time for people to experience the full benefits. Therefore, you may need to continue using your fast acting bronchodilators like Albuterol for sudden symptoms.

The medical team will determine the right strength for you and show you the proper technique in using this medication and caring for your inhaler. It should be taken as 2 puffs morning and 2 puffs evening. Rinse your mouth after each use as the corticosteroid component can interfere with the normal flora in your mouth causing thrush-like symptoms. Be aware of any side effects, the most common being throat irritation, and report all side effects to your medical provider.

The Influenza Virus

The leaves are turning, the temperature is dropping, and the days are shorter. It is, in fact, fall, and however a beautiful time of year, it can often be the most unhealthy due to the influenza virus. The influenza virus, or the "flu", generally affects people from November to April. Preventing yourself from getting the "flu" is always essential, and being educated about what the influenza virus is can help determine proper treatment.

Influenza (flu) is a viral upper respiratory illness that comes on suddenly, causing symptoms such as fever, body aches, headache, fatigue, loss of appetite, a dry cough and a sore or dry throat. The "Flu" almost never causes stomach symptoms; the illness that people often call "stomach flu" is not influenza.

Influenza is not the same as a common cold; "flu" symptoms are more severe, and usually lasts 7-10 days with the worst symptoms lasting 3-4 days.

For those who have a lung problem, such as asbestosis, the "flu" can be very serious. If any of the symptoms mentioned above become apparent in your life you must contact a physician immediately. If the "flu" is left untreated for too long it may lead to more serious complications, such as pneumonia. Treatment for the "flu" consists of plenty of rest, fluids, and aspirin to ease aches and fever.

Many precautions, including vaccines, can be taken to help decrease your chance of contracting the "flu". Vaccines available today contain a dead virus, and do not cause you to get sick when given one. The injection site may become red and irritated. Some people experience a fever with in the first 24-48 hours after receiving the vaccine but this just means your immune system is working. Basic hand washing and staying away from those affected are good ways to protect yourself from getting the "flu"!

Understanding CARD Funding

There seems to be some confusion around the topic of CARD funding. CARD is NOT associated with WR Grace in any way. CARD is not associated with any health plan or organization at all. CARD is an independent, non-profit organization that is funded by billing for patient services, research dollars, and donations from individuals and foundations. CARD is governed by a local community-based volunteer Board of Directors.

As reimbursement for healthcare services continue to decline, contributions to CARD are more important than ever. We rely on the generosity of donors to help continue our services. Donations assist in the purchase of equipment, expansion of services and facility enhancement to meet the needs of families and individuals impacted by asbestos exposure. All donations are tax-deductible. For more information on ways to give, contact Betty Jo Wood, Program Developer 293-9274 ext. 32.

www.goodsearch.com

Support CARD by searching the web!

An easy way to help CARD is through a new search engine powered by Yahoo! at a site called GoodSearch. They will make a \$.01 donation to CARD with every search and/or every online purchase at one of their partner merchants. It doesn't cost you a thing! The more people who use this site, the more money will go to CARD. So please spread the word to friends & family. Visit www.goodsearch.com. Once you're there enter in Center for Asbestos Related Disease as the organization you goodsearch for. Thanks for your donation!

What Is Resiliency?

-by Tanis Hernandez,
CARD Social Worker

Some people seem to have an amazing ability to deal with stressful and challenging life situations, such as those who live with a chronic disease. They are able to adapt without becoming overwhelmed and overall keep their life on course. They don't deny that there are difficult things to deal with sometimes, but they are able to confront whatever challenges come their way. This is called **Resiliency**. For many of us this involves learning new skills. This is a completely normal thing to do when we strive to successfully deal with the unexpected challenges that life presents. Here are some tips that can help all of us become more resilient.

It is important to **Know Yourself** and to be able to objectively look at yourself and say, "isn't it interesting how I reacted to that." If you didn't react in the most beneficial way, try out other ways of handling that situation when it presents again and evaluate the results. This is a difficult task as changing our reactions and behaviors takes time and a focused effort. It is also important to **Know Your Explanatory Style**. This means knowing how you are likely to respond to difficult times. Do you generally believe that things will work out okay or do you always think the worst will result? People who are resilient have learned to view their illness as an inconvenience and they remember that it's only one component of who they are. There's no

doubt that this can be a hard mindset to keep during difficult times. But having the right outlook can help a lot when times are tough.



Trust Yourself, Trust Your Body means learning to listen to your body's symptoms when it begins to tell you that things may get difficult in the near future. Trusting yourself to **Take Action** to deal with things when they first start will help you trust your body messages even more. In hand, this will help you trust yourself to anticipate and compensate for these challenges in the future. In summary, being resilient is not just about bouncing back after a fall, it's also about acting in advance to prevent the fall.

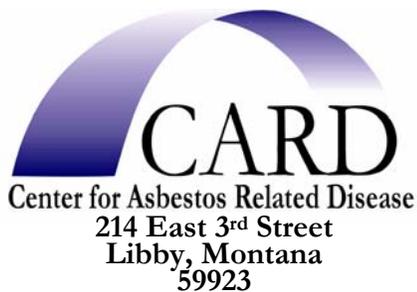
It is completely normal that there will be times when emotions seem to take over and run your life. Maybe you experience anger about having your illness or despair about dealing with it day after day. This being said, it is also important to **Deal With Your Emotions Wisely**. This means identifying what you are feeling, finding an

appropriate way to express it, and working towards a resolution if possible. This means **Being Flexible About Change**. People who are resilient are good at adapting. Not that they necessarily like the change, but they realize it is inevitable so there is no reason to stiffen up and resist it as that only makes things harder. This allows them to stay calm and figure out how to make the best of the new way things will need to be.

Developing Relationships and being willing to ask for help when you need it most, is an important part of being resilient. A strong relationship with family, friends, coworkers, or healthcare professionals is an important way to get needed assistance, information, and support. A **Close Relationship** with a spouse, or an important friend, also gives you a safe place to get the friendship and comfort needed to regain your strength and confidence to continue facing your difficulties.

Taking Care Of Yourself doesn't just mean taking care of your illness. It also means taking time to relax, play, to get energized and enjoy pleasurable things. When your illness is presenting you with difficult challenges remember that it is only one aspect of who you are. And while it is important, it is not your whole life. Make sure to appreciate the other parts of life.

**It's not about how hard
 you fall, it's about how
 high you bounce back...**



NONPROFIT
PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
LIBBY, MT
PERMIT #35

THE BIG CARD NEWS

CARD RESEARCH PLAYS IMPORTANT ROLE!

Many of you have probably heard about the required science that must be done to drive the clean up process in Libby. This is because Libby Amphibole Asbestos (LAA) is a different type of asbestos fiber compared to the more common “commercial” asbestos called chrysotile. Toxicological studies (that seek to understand how toxic the fiber is) and epidemiological studies (that seek to understand the health effects) must be done so the baseline risk assessment used to drive the clean up is based on LAA, not some other type of asbestos. Although EPA is facilitating all of this science, they are working with many expert researchers from around the country who are focusing on LAA.

CARD and all willing CARD patients play a very important role in the epidemiological studies that will help everyone understand the health effects of LAA. Many of you (over 300 people) have given permission for your de-identified (no names) health data to be included in CARD’s database. This is one of the questions that will be asked of every patient as part of the All-Inclusive Consent which was discussed in the last CARD NEWS. It is every patient’s individual choice. We hope everyone will participate because by organizing and combining all of this health data we will be able to truly understand the health effects of LAA. Understanding the health effects will not only guide clean up activities, but it will also guide research activities that are focused on discovering new treatments and cures for asbestos related diseases.