



Healthy Lungs Pennsylvania Offers Free Cold Weather Masks to Residents of Western Pennsylvania

CRANBERRY TOWNSHIP, PA – January 26, 2012 – Don't be fooled by the recent mild temperatures, there's still plenty of cold weather headed for the Pittsburgh region, and for people who suffer from lung disease, cold and dry winter air can exacerbate symptoms of those who suffer from breathing issues. As a way to help make winter more comfortable, Healthy Lungs Pennsylvania is offering free cold weather masks to residents of Western Pennsylvania

"Cold air restricts airflow to and from the lungs in the airways of people with lung diseases such as COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), emphysema and asthma," says Carol Ann Kuczma, Director of Programs and Services at Healthy Lungs Pennsylvania. "A cold weather mask helps to warm the air before it reaches the lungs," she added.

Developed by Healthy Lungs Pennsylvania over 30 years ago, the breathable foam mask loops over the ears and covers the mouth and nose, providing a pocket of warm air. In cold weather, when people tend to breathe in through their mouth, the air they inhale does not have a chance to warm up before reaching the lungs, which can cause airways to constrict and spasm.

The National Heart Lung and Blood Institute estimates that 12 million adults in the United States have COPD, and that another 12 million are undiagnosed. It is also currently the nation's fourth leading cause of death. According to the 2009 National Health Interview Survey, a little over 44,000 adults in Allegheny County have been diagnosed with chronic bronchitis and another 23,600 with emphysema.

Local residents who suffer from breathing issues are encouraged to call Healthy Lungs Pennsylvania to receive a free cold weather mask, or become a member of Breathing Partners, the organization's free educational group that provides resources to individuals suffering from lung disease. To order a mask, call 1-800-220-1990 or send an email to info@healthylungs.org.

Since its inception over 100 years ago, Healthy Lungs Pennsylvania has established a rich history of promoting lung health in the community. From its early days as an organization that helped fight tuberculosis in the region, to its evolution to an organization that offers programs to people with asthma, chronic lung disease, or who may be looking to quit smoking, Healthy Lungs Pennsylvania has the ability to assist anyone wishing to learn more about their lungs and how to keep them healthy.

About Healthy Lungs Pennsylvania

Since 1904, Healthy Lungs Pennsylvania has been committed to the prevention and control of lung disease. Through our programs and services, we help local residents who suffer from respiratory ailments such as asthma and COPD, provide information and resources to health care professionals, as well as offer preventative lung health and smoking cessation resources. To learn more, visit www.healthylungs.org.

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