Simple Test Detects Major Lung Disease

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DENVER —

Half the people with COPD don't know they have it and aren't getting treatment

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is the third leading cause of death in the United States, yet the National Institutes of Health estimates that 12 million people with the disease don't even know they have it. A simple test, called spirometry can help diagnose COPD. Free spirometry tests will be offered on four dates in December at select SmartCare Family Medical Centers.

"Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease is a treatable and preventable disease," said Rand Sutherland, MD, Associate Professor of Medicine at National Jewish. "Because people do not generally recognize symptoms of COPD until their lungs are functioning about half as well as normal, lung-function testing, or spirometry, is crucial to detecting the disease before extensive lung damage has occurred."

***New York Times*
on COPD**

From Smoking Boom, a Major Killer of Women

Researchers Search for Clues to COPD

Smoking, the Environment and an Epidemic of Lung Disease

COPD is an umbrella term for a variety of diseases, including emphysema and chronic bronchitis, that cause a progressive loss of airflow in lungs. It is caused primarily by smoking tobacco. Approximately 120,000 people die of COPD in the United States each year. Nearly 12 million have been diagnosed with the disease, but experts believe another 12 million are likely to have the disease.

There is no cure yet for COPD. Early detection of COPD, however, can lead to changes that slow the progressive loss of lung function, improve symptoms and quality of life and prevent flare-ups that can land a person in the hospital or even cause death.

COPD can be easily diagnosed with a simple spirometry test, which involves blowing hard into a machine that measures air flow in and out of a person's lungs. In addition to detecting potential COPD, spirometry tests can also detect other breathing abnormalities, such as asthma, that need further medical attention.

National Jewish is partnering with SmartCare Family Medical Centers to offer free spirometry tests the first week of December. The testing will be done at four separate SmartCare Centers located inside Wal-Mart Supercenters across the Denver metro area. SmartCare Centers offer walk-in healthcare services for minor acute illnesses in 15 Denver metro Wal-Mart Supercenters.

The free spirometry testing schedule is as follows:

- Saturday, Dec. 1 at 10am-2pm: 6101 South Aurora Parkway, Aurora
- Monday, Dec. 3 at 11am-3pm: 7800 East Smith Rd., Denver
- Tuesday, Dec. 4 at 10am-2pm: 500 Summit Blvd., Broomfield
- Thursday, Dec. 6 at 9am-1pm: 1325 North Denver Ave., Loveland

National Jewish Health is the leading respiratory hospital in the nation. Founded 124 years ago as a nonprofit hospital, National Jewish Health today is the only facility in the world dedicated exclusively to groundbreaking medical research and treatment of patients with respiratory, cardiac, immune and related disorders. Patients and families come to National Jewish Health from around the world to receive cutting-edge, comprehensive, coordinated care. To learn more, visit the media resources page.

Media Contacts

Our team is available to arrange interviews, discuss events and story ideas.

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