

Your Weekly Medical Advice

by Dr Jimmy Huang

"Committed to the care of our patients and community"


euroa medical

Clinic Hours

Monday – Friday 8am-6pm

Saturday 9am – 5pm

Phone (ALL HOURS) 5795 2011

Emergency clinic

Sundays and public holidays 9am – 11am

(in our rooms @ Euroa Health)

Phone 5795 0200

Emphysema

Emphysema and another lung condition known as “chronic bronchitis” (persistent cough with phlegm) are both features of a common lung disease called chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

The symptoms of emphysema include breathlessness with exertion and eventually, as the condition progresses, breathlessness all the time. Emphysema puts the individual at greater risk of developing chest infections and fatigue. It also causes a cough and phlegm production, cyanosis (a blue tinge to the skin) due to lack of oxygen and can see the patient develop a barrel-shaped chest, caused by constant expansion of the ribcage to accommodate enlarged lungs.

Complications of emphysema can include pneumonia (chest infections), collapsed lung and heart failure due to increased strain on the heart.

There is no cure for emphysema, although it is treatable. Appropriate management has been shown to reduce symptoms, improve quality of life and help people stay out of hospital.

Management includes:

- Smoking cessation (immediate and complete smoking cessation is the most effective treatment for COPD and emphysema) and avoidance of other air pollutants
- Respiratory (pulmonary) rehabilitation programs
- Oxygen treatment, in advanced cases
- Anti-inflammatory medications, medicine to widen the airways (bronchodilators) and loosen the phlegm, and antibiotics
- Stress management techniques
- Gentle, regular exercise to improve overall fitness
- Influenza vaccination (yearly) and pneumococcal vaccination to protect against certain types of respiratory infection

We would appreciate your feedback or topics you would like to hear about at business.manager@emfp.com.au