

Breathing Problems and Lung Disease



Q&A I hear a lot of talk about COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease). Does COPD mean the same thing as lung disease? How is COPD diagnosed?

COPD is a chronic lung disease associated with past or current tobacco use. Chronic bronchitis and emphysema are forms of COPD. Symptoms include breathlessness, cough and wheeze. COPD is diagnosed by giving a complete medical history and getting a physical exam, along with simple breathing tests called Pulmonary Function Tests, which can be ordered by your Primary Care Physician or Pulmonary Specialist

Q&A I had asthma as a youth but don't seem to have the same symptoms as an adult. Is it possible to outgrow asthma?

Many children outgrow asthma as adults. However, asthma is not just a disease of children and can be diagnosed as a new condition at any age.

Q&A What does a pulmonologist do and what does a respiratory therapist do?

A pulmonologist is a medical doctor who specializes in diagnosing and treating diseases involving the respiratory tract including asthma, COPD, cough, complicated lung infections, lung nodules, shortness of breath, pulmonary fibrosis, cystic fibrosis, obstructive sleep apnea, etc. A respiratory therapist works in conjunction with the pulmonologist to deliver therapeutic treatment to patients with respiratory symptoms or disease. These treatments can include oxygen, nebulizer treatments, chest physiotherapy, application of BiPAP or CPAP, etc. Respiratory therapists also perform pulmonary function testing.

Q&A What is bronchoscopy?

Bronchoscopy is an endoscopic procedure that allows a pulmonologist to look inside a person's airways. A bronchoscope is a thin tube with a digital camera that allows visualization of the airways. It also has channels that allow brushings, washings, or

Meet our Expert

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biopsies to be taken from the lungs. This procedure can be used to diagnose infections, recognize lung cancer, identify a source of bleeding, and remove anything blocking the airway including foreign objects.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and other lung diseases are often diagnosed with a series of lung function tests or even a chest X-ray or CT Scan.

Marlborough Hospital offers these and other advanced diagnostic imaging services.

Diagnostic imaging services offered at Marlborough Hospital include:

- Digital mammography
- Breast MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging)
- CT scanning
- MRI
- Nuclear stress testing
- Ultrasound
- General and fluoroscopic radiology
- Bone density testing
- Image-guided biopsy

For further information about the diagnostic imaging services at Marlborough Hospital please visit www.marlbroughhospital.org.

About Marlborough Hospital



Marlborough Hospital, a community resource since 1890, is served by a medical staff of more than 300 primary care physicians and specialists. The hospital provides a wide range of inpatient and outpatient medical, surgical and ancillary services, including oncology, laboratory and radiology services, physical therapy, cardiac rehabilitation, inpatient and partial day mental health services, as well as diabetes education and management. A state-of-the-art emergency department, staffed by emergency medicine physicians from UMass Memorial Medical Center, provides 24-hour emergency care. For more information about the hospital please visit: www.marlbroughhospital.org.



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