



**The sooner you blow, the sooner you know!**  
**Canadian Lung Association wants those at risk for lung disease to get tested**

**Ottawa, ON, October 14, 2011** – A simple breathing test can test for serious lung disease, yet only 26 per cent of current and former Canadian smokers over age 40 are aware of it, according to a new poll released by the Canadian Lung Association. To remedy the situation, the Canadian Lung Association is launching its *10,000 Breaths* campaign today to help those at risk for lung disease to get tested.

“Our target is to motivate 10,000 Canadians to have their lungs tested. Across Canada, we are hosting free breathing tests from October 14 until the end of November,” says Heather Borquez, CEO and president of the Canadian Lung Association. “If you or someone you love is having difficulty breathing or experiencing shortness of breath, get tested. Ask your doctor for a simple breathing test called spirometry.”

“Spirometry is one of the most effective ways to test your lungs for [COPD](#) (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; the new name for chronic bronchitis and emphysema) and asthma. It is a painless test that takes only a few minutes,” says Dr. Allan Coates, a medical spokesperson for the Canadian Lung Association on pulmonary function and a pediatric respirologist at Hospital for Sick Children.

During a spirometry test, you breathe hard into a machine (a spirometer) that measures how much air you can move out of your lungs and how fast you can blow it out.

“The earlier the test is performed, the earlier the lung disease can be detected and treated.,” says Dr. Coates, who chairs a committee on pulmonary function for the Canadian Thoracic Society, the medical section of the Canadian Lung Association.

**Smokers and ex-smokers over age 40 are at higher risk for COPD**

Polling results found that more smokers and former smokers over age 40 in British Columbia (32%) and Manitoba/Saskatchewan (31%) than in any other province know what a spirometry test is. In contrast, Quebec (21%) holds the lowest proportion of respondents aware of this test. Former smokers (27%) are marginally more likely than current smokers (24%) to be aware of what a spirometry test is.

"Unfortunately, there are too many people who have COPD but are undiagnosed. They suffer from symptoms, such as shortness of breath, cough with or without phlegm, wheeze, frequent chest infections, and having a hard time doing regular activities like walking," says Dr. Paul Hernandez, who chairs a committee on COPD for the Canadian Thoracic Society. "With early diagnosis and treatment, this serious lung disease can be managed so patients can breathe better and enjoy life more."

To learn more about spirometry or to find a local spirometry clinic, visit [www.lung.ca](http://www.lung.ca) or call 1-866-717-COPD (2673).

[Learn more about spirometry](#)

[Take an online quiz to find out if you are at risk for COPD](#)

[Watch a video on spirometry](#)

Find an event in your area [\(link to come\)](#)

### **About the survey**

From September 28<sup>th</sup> to September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2011, an online survey was conducted among a sample of 1,201 Canadians aged 40 and over who are or used to be regular cigarette smokers. All respondents are Angus Reid Forum panel members. The margin of error on the full base — which measures sampling variability — is +/- 3.1%. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

### **About the Canadian Lung Association**

Established in 1900, The Lung Association is one of Canada's oldest and most respected health charities, and the leading national organization for science-based information, research, education, support programs and advocacy on lung health issues.

### **About The Canadian Thoracic Society**

The Canadian Thoracic Society is a specialty society and the medical section of the Canadian Lung Association. The CTS promotes lung health by supporting the respiratory community through leadership, collaboration, research, education and advocacy, and promoting the best respiratory practices in Canada. [www.lung.ca/cts](http://www.lung.ca/cts)

**For more national media interviews, please contact:**

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