



2010: The Year of the Lung Messages

WHAT IS AND WHY DECLARE 2010: THE YEAR OF THE LUNG?

- 1. 2010: The Year of the Lung unifies different lung health advocates for one purpose: to transform the way people think about and treat their lungs.**
 - > With hundreds of millions of people suffering each year from treatable and preventable acute and chronic respiratory diseases, raising awareness about the importance of lung health is critical.
 - > Current lung health campaigns create competition between special interest groups; Asthma advocates find themselves contending with tuberculosis or pneumonia advocates for funding and attention from policymakers and donors. A combined approach to lung health needs to be started
- 2. Lung health has long been neglected in public discourse.**
 - > Lung diseases, including asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), cause more than four million deaths each year, yet most lung disease is preventable.
- 3. Lung disease is pervasive and does not discriminate against age, gender or geography.**
 - > Lung cancer, pneumonia and COPD are the main respiratory causes of death in Western Europe, as well as in Central and Eastern Europe.
 - > Four million people die every year and one-in-three newborn deaths result from pneumonia.
 - > Lung cancer is predicted to remain the number three killer in Western as well as in Eastern Europe.
 - > In the United States, the leading respiratory killers are vascular disease and lung cancer.
 - > In China, COPD causes more tobacco-related deaths than lung cancer.
 - > Almost half the world's tuberculosis deaths occur in India.

WHY CARE ABOUT LUNG HEALTH?

- 4. Lungs are the body's lifeline to wellness.**
 - > We can live only seconds without air.
 - > The lungs are responsible for breathing life into all organs and tissues of the body.
 - > The lungs transport oxygen to the heart.
 - > As communities and households share the same air, lung disease can quickly spread among individuals, causing infection or even death.



5. Improving lung health can decrease preventable lung diseases, including asthma, tuberculosis, pneumonia, lung cancer and COPD.

- > Lung health can be improved by avoiding smoking, exercising regularly and avoiding pollutants when possible.

6. Lung disease has long been associated with diseases caused by tobacco usage; however smoking is just one of the factors leading to chronic lung disease.

- > In high- and middle-income countries tobacco smoke is the biggest risk factor for COPD.
- > In low-income countries, factors that lead to COPD include exposure to indoor air pollution, such as the use of biomass fuels for cooking and heating, which affects nearly 3 billion people worldwide who use biomass and coal as their main source of energy.
- > Biomass fuels used by women for cooking account for the high prevalence of COPD among nonsmoking women in parts of the Middle East, Africa and Asia.
- > Nearly half the world's population lives in or near population centers with poor outdoor air quality.

7. In the past 25 years, no significant advances have been made in diagnostic tools or treatments for lung disease.

- > No new anti-TB agents have been introduced since the 1970's.
- > While X-rays, sputum microscopy and the stethoscope are the most common tools for diagnosing respiratory diseases, they cannot detect all conditions.
- > Although lung disease is the second largest cause of mortality in the UK, its research funding attracts only 2% of government allocations.

8. Diagnosis and treatment for lung disease is historically underfunded.

9. Early detection methods are essential because many lung diseases are under-diagnosed or not diagnosed until the condition is at a late stage.

- > Globally, diagnostic tests, including spirometry are not readily available, resulting in under-diagnosis of chronic or acute lung diseases.
- > Chronic respiratory diseases are under-diagnosed in all countries, but particularly in low-and middle-income countries.
- > Even in high-income countries where medicines are available, they are not always affordable.
- > Almost 40% of TB cases are not properly detected and treated.
- > Most pneumonia cases are detected only when the infection has grown to an advanced state.

10. Policies to regulate air quality and create health infrastructure to protect the general public's lung health are lagging.

- > As of June 20, 2007, only 148 countries out of 193 WHO Member States had ratified the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.
- > According to the UNEP, while some progress has been made to improve air quality in developed countries, the air quality in many developing countries is deteriorating.



11. Lung disease exacts a tremendous financial burden on the patient, caregiver and society.

- > The total financial burden of lung disease in Europe amounts to nearly €102 billion and \$15 billion in the United States and the United Kingdom combined.
- > In 2009, the U.S. National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute estimated that the cost of providing healthcare related to all respiratory conditions, excluding lung cancer, was \$113 billion.
- > Lung disease leads to reduction in income owing to loss of productivity caused by illness or death.
- > Lung disease can lead to lost opportunities for young household members who leave school to act as caregivers or who are ill themselves.

12. The public health burden caused by lung disease is immeasurable.

- > Measured in DALYs, in 2005 the burden of chronic respiratory diseases was projected to account for 4% of the global burden and 8.3% of the burden of chronic diseases.
- > By 2020 out of 68 million deaths worldwide 11.9 will be caused by lung disease.

2010: THE YEAR OF THE LUNG CALL TO ACTION

13. 2010: *The Year of the Lung* calls for increased awareness and action on lung health.

- > (For policymakers) To protect the public, policymakers must enact smoking cessation legislation and programs to reduce the prevalence and stigma of tobacco-related lung diseases.
- > (For policymakers) Supporting air quality legislation is essential to decrease the rate of lung disease globally.
- > (For funders) It is critical that public and private funders donate to lung health R&D.
- > (For clinicians) Lung health clinicians should set aside their priority issue areas and come together to diagnose and treat the lung as a whole.
- > (For researchers) Researchers must spend time and energy on new tools and medicines to improve diagnosis time and treatment outcomes for lung disease patients.

****Note: Message #13 can be changed depending on the target audience.**

- > If speaking to policymakers, the message could read “*2010: The Year of the Lung* calls for increased legislation on lung health.”
- > If speaking to donors, the message could read “*2010: The Year of the Lung* calls for increased funding for lung health.”