# Living with and Managing Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis



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Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis (IPF) is a debilitating and ultimately fatal disease that has no known cause. It is characterized by scarring of the lungs, and over time hinders a patient's ability to breathe. Dr. Charles Chan, an IPF Researcher and Respirologist, says that until recently, when someone was diagnosed with IPF, "on average, they may have been expected to live somewhere between three to five years." Due to advances in care, Dr. Chan estimates life expectancy at four to six years, or slightly longer.

# THE OUTLOOK IS IMPROVING

Increased disease awareness and advances in diagnostic imaging technologies have helped with earlier diagnosis, and that's good news. According to Dr. Chan, with earlier diagnosis "there's no question the patient's survival and outlook are improved."

## **OPTIONS AVAILABLE FOR MANAGING THE DISEASE**

Applying strategies to help preserve the lungs can improve both the quality and length of life. In his Guide to Patients Living with IPF, Robert Davidson, the founder of the Canadian Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation (CPFF) says, "the first and most important thing is to take charge of your own health care. Every person is different and this disease is still relatively new to the medical community and the community at large." Upon diagnosis, you should ask to be referred to an IPF specialist, and know what you can do to help manage your disease.

# STRATEGIES TO HELP MANAGE IPF

- Get your flu shot & pneumonia vaccine
- **Ensure proper treatment of any lung infection**
- If you or those around you smoke try to quit
- If you are overweight try to lose weight
- Start an exercise program
- If you have GERD start anti-reflux therapy
- Speak to your respirologist to develop a management strategy

For more information about living with and managing Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis, speak with your doctor and visit the Canadian Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation at: www.cpff.ca

Visit www.HealthandFamily.ca in September 2014 to view the educational video "Living with and Managing Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis" in recognition of IPF Awareness Month. This health education initiative is brought to you with the support of InterMune Canada Inc.





Hosted by Dr. Marla Shapiro



2. Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis Patient Information Guide. Canadian Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation (CPFF). What you can do.

Accessed April 22, 2014 at: http://www.canadianpulmonaryfibrosis.ca/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/IPF\_Guide\_2012\_Final.pdf