



# YOUR HEALTH AND WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

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## The Power of Posture

### *An inside look at why posture and breathing matters*

Posture is so important when it comes to breathing. You might think, "I breathe just fine, I didn't come to therapy to focus on breathing", however there are long-term consequences of impaired posture that may put your respiratory function at risk in the future. Not only do the therapists of Life Beyond Barriers Rehabilitation Group (LBBRG) focus on your functional goals, but they also play a pivotal role in prevention of complications. With a neurological condition, you may have increased risk for respiratory complications including segmental lung collapse, pneumonia, and respiratory failure. If you experience a period of prolonged bedrest and/or have comorbid conditions, that may further complicate your respiratory function.

Your respiratory system relies on voluntary and involuntary controls. Your nervous system and your muscles work together during respiration. Muscle groups involved in respiratory function include your diaphragm, accessory muscles (neck and shoulder muscles), intercostals (muscles between your ribs), and abdominal muscles including the pelvic floor. When one muscle is weak or not functional, other muscle groups take over to compensate. Posturing allows certain muscles to work more efficiently. When your posture changes, so does your breathing. Over time, if muscles are not used and posture is compromised, stiffness and musculoskeletal changes occur that cannot be easily corrected, inhibiting lung capacity. This is one of the many reasons therapists are obsessed with your posture.

Your therapist may obtain a spirometry evaluation and take circumferential measures of your chest and abdomen to evaluate lung capacity. This data provides a baseline and feedback on interventions focused on posture and breathing. Each therapist has a stake in posture and breathing, working collaboratively to achieve functional outcomes. Speech therapists may have emphasis on posture and breathing to maintain or improve voice projection and volume, keep airways clear of secretions, and swallowing coordinated with breathing and posture techniques. Occupational therapists are interested in trunk support and breathing to support activation of specific muscle groups of the upper extremities. Occupational therapists may pair movements with breathing and postural correction, to improve fluidity and coordination of upper extremities. Physical therapists have a strong emphasis on posture and pairing movements with breathing, as it impacts overall balance and motor function. Physical Therapists may recommend wearable postural supports and postural props for positioning. They may work collaboratively with Assistive Technology Professional on seating adjustments or different equipment options.

At LBBRG, your long-term respiratory management matters. It is important to have a periodic assessment of your respiratory function, especially if you have comorbid conditions or experienced a long period of immobility. Talk with your therapist about what things you can do outside of therapy to promote respiratory function with posture awareness and breathing.



**September is Spinal Cord Injury Awareness month!** A point of awareness: if someone who has a Spinal Cord Injury has difficulty breathing *do not place them in a seated position*. This increases the work of breathing due to additional strain of working against gravity. Seek medical attention immediately.

## What's happening?

To support caregivers, LBBRG continues to host **The Caregiver's Table** meetings in a virtual format, the fourth Wednesday of every month at 4:00 pm. If you would like more information or would like more information on how to join this supportive meetup group, contact Kyle via email [kmmdearis@lbbrehab.com](mailto:kmmdearis@lbbrehab.com) or Sara [sroach@lbbrehab.com](mailto:sroach@lbbrehab.com).

LBBRG offers **Parkinson's Wellness Recovery (PWR!)** classes, available on Tuesdays at 4:00 pm in the Rockford clinic. Are you looking for a place to safely continue an exercise program guided by professionals for a low cost? To access the flyer, follow the link <http://lbbrehab.com/news>.

## What's new?

LBBRG has been blessed with two new therapists: Speech Therapist - Susan Valensky, M.A., CF-SLP and Physical Therapist - Shannon Feutz, DPT! Check out our Facebook for their "Behind the Mask" features. [www.facebook.com/LBBRG](http://www.facebook.com/LBBRG)

## LBBRG is CARF Accredited

Life Beyond Barriers Rehabilitation Group (LBBRG) recently earned the Gold Seal of Excellence - CARF Accreditation. What is CARF? CARF is an acronym that stands for Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities. During the month of June, LBBRG took a bold step forward inviting CARF surveyors to the clinic for the very first time to review program and its operations. CARF has a set of standards with an emphasis on quality and satisfaction that they use when evaluating a program. LBBRG earned recognition in meeting those standards. What does this mean? LBBRG is committed to continuous quality improvement planning and doing. LBBRG will continue to strive for quality outcomes and satisfaction with it's client-centered approach.

