

# Symptom Management- Cough

Peter LaCamera, MD

- *Why do I cough?*
- *What does it mean?*
- *How can I treat it?*
- *Is there research being done on cough in IPF?*

## Why do I cough?

IPF as the cause of your cough is a diagnosis of exclusion – IPF should be blamed once common causes of cough are excluded

Common causes to consider:

- post-nasal drip from inflammation / irritation of nose and/or sinuses can be either allergic or non-allergic in nature
- asthma / allergies
- esophageal reflux (acid reflux, GERD)
- smoking, COPD – chronic bronchitis
- medications

An IPF cough seems to be a result of:

- Excessive excitability of airway nerves
- Distortion of small airways
- Traction bronchiectasis – increased sputum production and pooling
- GERD

## *What does it mean?*

### **Risk factors for IPF related cough:**

- **No history of smoking**
- **More advanced disease**

### **Does a persistent cough predict worsening?**

- **Possibly, but only 1 trial demonstrating this**
- **It is likely that other measurements more accurately predict progression**

### **Does a new / worsening cough signal an up-tick in disease activity?**

- **Possibly, important to share these changes with your physician**

### **Do the 2 new medications help with cough?**

- **In the trials, they did not seem to effect the chances of developing a cough**
- **Whether they help with an existing cough is not known**

## How can I treat my cough?

### Oral therapies:

#### OTC

- dextromethorphan (max dose 120 mg / day) - consider taking routinely rather than as needed
- (guaifenesin is not a cough suppressant)

#### Prescription

- Opiates
  - codeine, hydrocodone, morphine, others
- benzonatate – consider taking routinely rather than as needed
- prednisone – can help with congestion

## **Nebulized options:**

- **saline**
- **hypertonic saline to help with expectoration**
- **ipratropium / albuterol**
- **lidocaine**
- **morphine / hydromorphone**

## **Other:**

- **fentanyl patch**
- **inhalers**

## **Audience recommendations:**

# Where is the field going?

## Cough in IPF Research:

- **Thalidomide**

Horton MR Thorax 2008; Horton MR Ann Intern Med 2012

- **Pirfenidone**

Azuma A Resp Res 2011 (Japan)

Effect of Pirfenidone on Cough in Patients With IPF (ongoing trial in Europe)

- **AF-219**

Early phase trial in NC

- **Nebulized PA101**

Early phase trial in Europe