

Steve Cooper and Tony Talmich are Atos Patient Ambassadors pictured here at the International Association of Laryngectomees (IAL) Voice Institute and Annual Meeting in 2019.



We are deeply saddened by the loss of our friend and Atos Patient Ambassador, John Ready, on Jan 6, 2022. John dedicated his life to giving back to the laryngectomy community, becoming an inspiration to so many. Look for a full tribute to this amazing man in our next newsletter. Please join us in sending our deepest condolences to his family and all those he touched.

John's family has requested that any pictures or stories of you and John be emailed to his daughter Vanessa at Vready1@yahoo.com



Atos Patient Ambassador Program: Peer support for laryngectomy patients

"I continually welcome the opportunity to meet with new patients, family members and others. Other than my wife and family, what I'm most proud of is being a very strong advocate and mentor in the laryngectomy community." - Steve Cooper, Atos Patient Ambassador

At Atos Medical, we recognize that undergoing total laryngectomy surgery is life changing. As part of our commitment to provide support and services to the laryngectomy community, we launched our Patient Ambassador program in 2020 to help put people in touch with those who have a shared experience. This program provides a unique opportunity to speak with someone who has undergone a total laryngectomy, which many people find helpful. These one-on-one sessions with a Patient Ambassador allow individuals to learn about their journey and ask any questions they may have about life after laryngectomy.

Peer mentors are often the best educators because they have gone through similar challenges and triumphs. Interacting with a Patient Ambassador can provide inspiration to regaining your voice, achieving a high quality of life and having the ability to return to doing the things you love after laryngectomy. The impact of a peer-to-peer connection is immeasurable,

See "Ambassadors" on page 2

“Ambassadors” continued from page 1



Steve Cooper and Joe Mulligan at a conference in 2019.

and we are so happy to have several extraordinary Patient Ambassadors at this time: Henry Childress, Steven Cooper, Joe Mulligan and Tony Talmich.

Currently, the Ambassadors are connecting with laryngectomy patients and their caregivers using a HIPAA-compliant virtual platform or over the phone. We look forward to growing and expanding this program in the future and to be able to offer in-person visits as well. We will be introducing our current Patient Ambassadors over the next few issues of this newsletter. To connect with one of the Ambassadors, please contact us at **+1.800.217.0025** or **info.us@atosmedical.com** so we can arrange a meeting.

Steve Cooper is a mentor for Imerman Angels Cancer Support Group and currently serves or has served as board member for the following organizations:

- Lary’s Speakeasy
- The Governor’s Board of Telecommunication Relay (MD)
- The Laryngectomee Club of Montgomery County MD
- The International Association of Laryngectomees
- WebWhispers



Meet Steve:

Steve is a lifelong resident of the state of Maryland. He is married to his wife Robin, whom he met in high school over 49 years ago. They have three adult children who all live nearby in Washington DC. Steve had his laryngectomy surgery in February of 2019 and a secondary puncture with tracheoesophageal voice prosthesis (TEP) placement in September 2019. Post-laryngectomy, he has been able to continue his career as

owner/manager of a wholesale food brokerage business. Steve began volunteering just a few months after that first surgery in June 2019 by working with the organization WebWhispers to mail safety alert kits. Since then, he has embraced the laryngectomy community and volunteers with many organizations. Here is a bit about Steve in his own words:

“My first ‘official’ peer-to-peer patient visit was at the request of my SLP in December 2019. Because of the early help and ongoing mentoring that I received from many of the wonderful members of the laryngectomee community, I have been instilled with a heartfelt desire to assist other laryngectomees or family members in any way that I can. I wanted to participate in the Atos Patient Ambassador program because I feel they are a good company, and I am honored to be able to be a part of their outreach to help others in the community. Additionally, I’ve found that Atos is genuinely interested in hearing ‘our stories’, in an effort to improve the products, services and outreach that they provide. I have met with many new laryngectomees or patients that are about to have this life changing surgery and always find this to be a very rewarding experience.”

“Above all, my advice is to find support groups and get connected with another laryngectomee. It will be one of the most important things you can do to help your recovery. Take it one day at a time, appreciate the advances, don’t dwell on the setbacks. For spouses and family members, be patient and understanding. Join a support group as well, so you can understand the issues and emotions a laryngectomee must deal with. Be forgiving and understanding; we often take out our feelings on the ones that are closest to us.”

Adjusting to seasonal changes:

Tips to help you as the conditions change

The air is typically colder and less humid as we turn on our heaters during the winter months. This is especially relevant for people who have had a laryngectomy. Since you no longer breathe through your nose and your mouth, the air you breathe is not warmed or moisturized before it reaches the lungs. Cool, dry, winter air and heated, indoor air impact lung health, while changes in temperature and humidity may also cause skin to become dry.



Colder, dryer air may result in:

- thickened, blood-tinged mucus, crusty stoma
- increased coughing and mucus production
- irritation and inflammation of the airway
- itchy, cracked, irritated skin

Use of Provox® Life™ HMEs 24/7 reduces coughing and mucus production*. During colder months, consider using the daytime HME that has the **highest humidification** while still **allowing you to breathe comfortably** when enjoying activities. Provox® Life™ Night HME provides the highest humidification of all the Provox Life HMEs. Using Night HME while you sleep is a great way to maximize humidification. Talk to your clinician about what options would be best for you.



Provox® Life™ Protect is not only an HME, but also a highly-effective bacterial and viral filter providing protection from airborne particles (such as viruses, bacteria, dust and pollen) by effectively filtering the air you breathe in through the stoma.** Consider Protect HME when going out during cold and flu season, allergy season or anytime you need extra protection.

It is also important to protect and take care of your skin.

- Developing good habits for prepping your skin and removing the adhesive may help prevent skin irritation.
- It is important **not** to use wipes with alcohol as they will further dry the skin.

Atos Medical offers Provox® Skin Barrier for protecting the skin and Provox® Adhesive Remover for removing the adhesive. Both wipes are alcohol-free. **Do not use these or any wipes or skin preparation with Provox® Life™ Night adhesive.**

For more tips, join us for a virtual Community Event.

The current event topic, Adjusting to Seasonal Changes, will feature discussion on ways to help optimize your lung and skin health throughout the year. For more information or to register, go to the COMMUNITY tab on our website, www.atosmedical.us, or call our events team at **1.800.217.0025**.

Research study: You are invited to participate

Experiencing the SARS COVID-19 Outbreak as a person with a laryngectomy

is a follow-up study to study conducted in the summer of 2020. This online survey from Michigan State focuses on learning about your experience as a person with a laryngectomy during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak. Your participation in this study will take approximately 15 minutes.

For more information or to participate in the survey, please type this link into your browser: www.bit.ly/3qkJhs



* Data on file **PLEASE NOTE: Since pathogens can enter and leave the human body in other ways (such as the mouth, nose and eyes) Provox Life Protect HME can never guarantee complete protection. Filtration capacity may vary depending on the size, shape and speed of airborne particles.



Breathing-Speaking-Living

Atos Medical Inc.
2801 South Moorland Road
New Berlin, WI 53151-3743

Let's all do our part to raise awareness: Oral, Head and Neck Cancer Awareness Week

The Head and Neck Cancer Alliance (HNCA) is hosting its 24th annual Oral, Head and Neck Cancer Awareness Week® (OHANCAW®) **April 3 - 9, 2022**. For more than two decades, HNCA has worked with partners around the world to educate the public in the treatment and prevention of oral, head and neck cancer and promote early detection.



Information about OHANCAW® activities and free cancer screenings will be available early in 2022. For details, please visit www.headandneck.org and join us in raising awareness!

Oral, head and neck cancers claim approximately 13,000 lives per year in the US; however, if diagnosed early, these cancers can be more easily treated without significant complications and the chances of survival greatly increase.



Every adult should be screened. Tobacco and alcohol users traditionally have been considered the populations at greatest risk for these cancers; however, throat cancer cases are on the rise in younger adults who do not smoke.

