

MYRESPIRATORYCARESPACE.COM

by Lisa Rapple M.Ed RRT



Blogs have become a very popular way to share information in an interactive format on the Internet. Some blogs function as a personal online diary. However, the blogs I am referring to are typically a reverse chronology of commentary or news on current events. And they are specific to a special interest or particular subject. The neat thing about blogs is the ability to be interactive, inviting comments and submissions from the interest group it serves. This can make a very strong social impact because it gives an open forum to many individuals and groups that would not have that kind of public exposure otherwise. Technorati, a search engine specific to blogs, describes it this way: "Blogs are powerful because they allow millions of people to easily publish and share their ideas, and millions more to read and respond."

So, where does a respiratory therapist go to blog? I found several examples of respiratory care blogs and had a lot of fun with it. Each blog is a bit different in style and level of formality. It depends on the person designing and writing the blog. My first suggestion is to visit www.rhonchi.com. According to the blog's author this blog is "for Respiratory Techs, Therapists, Care Practitioners, Snotsuckers, and other Respiratory Terrorists". It has been developed and maintained by blogger and former respiratory therapist, Joe Crawford. The most current posts are found on the main page as is typical of a blog. On the right there is a vertical column that has search links for various topics. By clicking on a category a list of posts about that topic will be created. Synopses of recent posted comments are in the right-hand column as well. There is also a search tool for the blog site.

Most of the site is commentary on current events concerning respiratory care or respiratory therapists. Links are provided for further reading. Comments from readers are encouraged and readily responded to by Joe. The site has a clean appearance and is easy to read and navigate. Joe is a Web Developer in the Los Angeles area.

At resptherapy.com is a blog titled "Respiratory Therapy Blog – from the front lines of critical care." Here JeffD follows a typical blog format, but he uses more videos and illustrations in his blog entries. Here I watched YouTube and Google videos of interest. One showed some whacky guys (R.T.'s, I'm sure) testing the theory that oxygen tanks can blast through a concrete wall (we've all tried to impress nurses with that tale at one time or another, but haven't you wondered if it is true? Watch the video and find out!). Another video clip showed lung recruitment using PEEP. A pair of rabbit lungs was suspended in mid-air receiving various levels of PEEP. Very cool to see. JeffD provides linked references for his entries. There are two columns in the margins of the page. These columns contain an index of posted titles, links to journals, forums, national societies, and archived blogs. There is also a linked category list that reflects the critical care theme of the blog. In the upper right corner JeffD has a chat window where you can leave him a message or chat with him live when he is online. JeffD is a Canadian respiratory therapist that specializes in critical care.

To see an example of a blog that is a bit more of a personal journal, visit Julia at snotjockeys.blogspot.com. Julia shares personal thoughts and enlightenments as she is inspired by respiratory care as a career and a field of study. Julia is a Respiratory Therapist somewhere in the Midwest and has been blogging less than a year. Here is an example of Julia's compassion in her writing "So Heliox has the potential to increase exercise tolerance in COPD patients. I am always heartened when I read of ways RTs can help with improving the activity and lifestyle of our chronically ill patients. After working all these years in the hospital, and seeing more than enough disabled patients, I want to wave a magic wand over them and restore their ability to live and enjoy life."

If you'd like to search for yourself for interesting blog sites or blog entries your best bet is to visit Technorati.com. This is a search engine specifically designed to search Internet blogs. According to Technorati there are currently over 70 million blogs with 175,000 new ones added to the web every day. The Technorati search engine will allow you to search for blog sites or blog entries with your favorite word or phrase. If you have interests beyond respiratory care, you will be able to find blogs where you can get ideas, learn, and ask questions of someone with an expertise in your area of interest. Go see what you can find! And check out the blogs I've mentioned. You'll enjoy the experience and you may decide to blog yourself.

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