Introduction: Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a chronic lung disease which diminishes the hability to breath, because of an obstruction to air flow which occurs in most cases due to smoking in a long time. This limitation in airflow is not fully reversible and usually progresses over the years. According to the Brazilian Journal of Pulmonology (2005), COPD is considered the fifth leading cause of death in Brazil and sixth in the world. It is extremely important to your understanding possibility as nurses, better care and rehabilitation to patients with the problem at hand. Many people do not realize that the disease exists, so it is diagnosed quite late which reinforces the need to accomplish health education to help prevent this disease (GOLD, WHO and NHLBI, 2009). We have as objective to present an experience report, experienced by nursing students at the Federal University of Santa Maria, during the preparation of a case study on the pathology of COPD, making a comparison between what the theory is and what the patient and highlight the need for knowledge of nursing professionals, which are facilitating the acceptance of disease and injury prevention.

Methodology: This is an experience report, obtained on a case study organized by the discipline of nursing in the care of Adult Undergraduate Program in Nursing, Federal University of Santa Maria. This discipline calls for a case study for the purpose of monitoring the patient, the study of pathology, research and enhance knowledge about specific situations experienced during clinical practice developed at the University Hospital of Santa Maria (HUSM) / RS. The study design was organized in two stages: the first was a literature review and monitoring a second patient. For monitoring and development of the study was selected one patient who was hospitalized with a diagnosis of COPD. How is an activity of the discipline was not necessary to route the project to the Research Ethics Committee, but was told the patient’s consent to conduct such a study.

Results: Mr. D.F.O. a patient is male, white, age 63, married, retired from the city of Santiago, a smoker for over 30 years and stopped smoking 15 years. This patient before retiring was a municipal civil servant, working in a workshop of the city of Santiago and was routinely exposed to smoke from engines (trucks, heavy machinery), welding and powder. During our contact told us that he sought treatment at HUSM in 2004, when he was diagnosed with pneumonia. From there the cough became frequent when performing any activity. On 19/05/2010, during another pneumonia was diagnosed bronquioectasy performed spirometry and lung lobe in middle and lower right and GOLD IV. After this diagnosis and before any breathing difficulties who had been referred to outpatient physiotherapy on 21/09/2010, and from then accompanied by a multidisciplinary team. Making a comparison between the case of COPD and studied in the literature that states we can observe some common features, such as weight loss and decreased appetite, weight loss due to the increased work of breathing muscles, dyspnea, chest pain, cough frequent abdominal breathing, the presence of noise in the hemithorax, fatigue and others. Second (Pamplona.P, 2009), smokers with COPD are: higher consumption of tobacco and nicotine are more dependent on higher levels of carbon monoxide (CO) in exhaled air, a breathing pattern different and more psychiatric disorders, such as depression.

Conclusion: The nurse has a role of facilitator in connection with any disease, showing alternatives to patients, eaching care for family members and also responding to the needs that the patient has. In the case of COPD people get serious
limitations and fail to develop effectively even everyday activities such as wearing clothes or a few rungs and is of extreme importance to the action of nurses in these situations, providing support for possible upgrades, new habits and mainly acceptance of the new condition of life. Evaluating, caring, educating and preventing teams become more effective and with drug treatment can successfully meet its task of reducing the pain and attempt to improve the severity of COPD.

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