



Living With Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)*

Managing Your Diet, Fitness, and Moods

*Includes chronic bronchitis, emphysema, or both.



Learning to Live Well With COPD

To live well with COPD,* you need to play an active role in your health. What you do to stay healthy is important. By taking an active role in your health and taking your medicines as you were told, you will help manage your COPD.

A big part of staying well is making healthy lifestyle choices. What you eat, what you do, and how you cope day to day all have a big impact on your health. In this booklet, we will explain why healthy habits are important. We will show you how you can make them a part of your daily life. We'll discuss ideas to help you enjoy your leisure time. And we'll show you ways that may help you deal with your moods, and with stress, too.

*Chronic (kron-ick) obstructive (ob-struck-tiv) pulmonary (pull-muh-nair-ee) disease, including chronic bronchitis (bron-ki-tis), emphysema (em-fuh-zee-muh), or both.

This Booklet Will Help You Answer Concerns, Such as...

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Managing Your Diet

How does your weight affect COPD?

You need to stay at a healthy weight when you have COPD. How much you weigh affects how well your body works.

Ask your healthcare professional or dietitian (die-eh-tih-shun) about a weight that is right for you. Try to get to this weight—and stay there. Ask about foods you can eat and activities you should do.

If you weigh too much...

- Your heart and lungs have to work harder
- Breathing is harder

If you weigh too little...

- You may have less energy
- You might feel weak and tired
- You may be more likely to get an infection

What should you be eating?

For most people with COPD, a healthy diet is made up of foods from each of the basic food groups, including:

- Fruits and vegetables
- Cereals and whole-grain foods
- Dairy products such as milk or cheese
- Proteins such as meat or fish

Make up a food plan that is right for you.

Work with your healthcare professional or see a dietitian, who is an expert in nutrition.

Limit salt and caffeine.

Avoid overeating and avoid foods that cause gas, such as:

- Carbonated drinks
- Fried or spicy foods



Managing Your Diet

How can you improve your eating habits?

If you feel short of breath while eating:

- Eat 6 small meals instead of 3 big meals
- Eat while sitting up
- Eat slowly and chew foods well
- Use pursed-lip breathing while you eat (see page 11)
- Drink liquids at the end of your meal
- Control your salt intake

To improve your appetite:

- Try to eat more protein, such as chicken and fish
- Eat small meals and healthy snacks often
- Eat and drink fewer foods with simple sugars (such as sweets, soda, and candy)
- Keep healthy food within easy reach

Check with your healthcare professional before you try any of these tips.

How much should you be drinking?

Ask your doctor how much you should be drinking.

Drink water and beverages that do not contain caffeine or alcohol. Drinking fluids can help thin out the mucus and keep your airways open.



Managing Your Fitness

How does keeping fit help your COPD?

Some people with COPD think exercise will make their breathing worse, but the opposite is true. In fact, doing no activity can make your COPD worse.

Keeping active can:

- Help you feel less short of breath
- Give you more strength and endurance while you do your daily activities
- Improve the health of your heart
- Help keep you more relaxed



What exercises should you do?

Talk to your healthcare professional—he or she may suggest:

- Stretching (good to do anytime, like when warming up and cooling down when you exercise)
- Walking
- Slow dancing
- Riding a stationary bike
- Yoga
- Swimming



Managing Your Fitness

Ask your doctor about pulmonary rehabilitation

Your healthcare professional may want you to have pulmonary rehabilitation (pull-muh-nair-ee ree-ha-bill-ih-tay-shun).

Pulmonary rehabilitation can help you:

- Learn how to breathe easier
- Possibly reduce your need for some medicines
- Relieve stress and anxiety
- Increase your ability to do daily activities and exercise
- Have a better quality of life

A care plan can be made for you. It may include:

- Breathing exercises
- Answers to your questions about how and when to take your medicines (including oxygen)
- Recommendations for healthy living, such as exercise and food plans
- Help with your social support needs



Breathing exercises

There are many breathing exercises to choose from. When used correctly, these exercises can help keep you from getting short of breath during activities.

Pursed-lip breathing exercise

Pursed-lip breathing can control shortness of breath. Use it when you start to feel short of breath. Or use it when it becomes harder to do things.



Follow these steps:

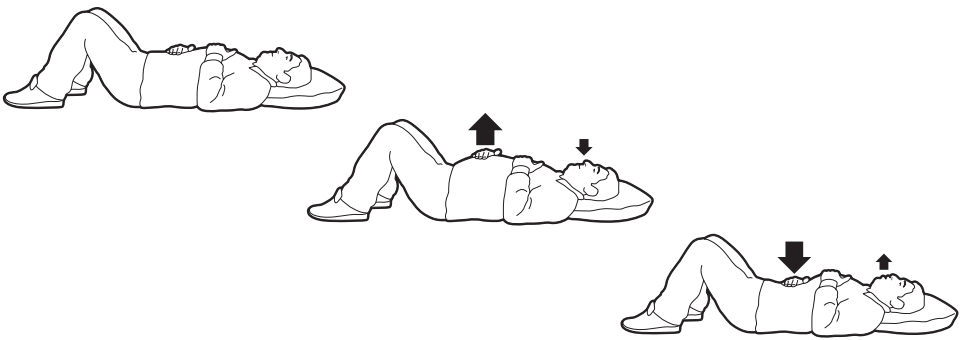
1. Breathe in slowly through your nose with your mouth closed. As you inhale, count "1, 2"
2. Purse (pucker) your lips as if you were going to whistle, and breathe out slowly
3. Take twice as long to breathe out as you did to breathe in
4. Relax and repeat

Managing Your Fitness

Breathing exercises

Diaphragmatic breathing (belly breathing) exercise

This kind of “belly” breathing helps your diaphragm move. (The diaphragm is the dome-shaped muscle at the bottom of your lungs.) The movement lets you take more air into your lungs and makes breathing easier.



Follow these steps:

- 1.** Lie on your back with your knees bent. Put a pillow under your head. After you do this exercise for some time, you can try it while sitting in a chair
- 2.** Put the palm of one hand on your belly. Put the palm of your other hand on your chest
- 3.** Breathe in slowly through your nose. Your belly should push out against your hand. Your chest should not move
- 4.** Tighten your belly muscles. Breathe out slowly through your mouth. Keep your lips pursed. You should feel your belly go down

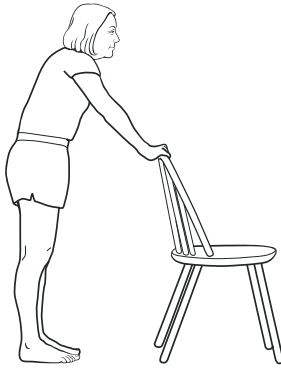
Start by doing this exercise for 5 to 10 minutes, 3 or 4 times a day. You can slowly increase the amount of time you do this.

Get into a position to breathe!

The way you sit or stand can sometimes make breathing easier. The following positions can help you avoid getting tired and having shortness of breath.

When you're standing...

- Rest your arms on an object like the back of a chair
- Bend your knees slightly



When you're sitting...

- Keep your back straight and lean forward
- Place your hands, elbows, or lower arms on your thighs or knees, or over a table
- Spread your knees a bit



Managing Your Fitness

Getting enough rest?

Keeping fit also means you get enough rest.

If you have trouble sleeping, try these tips:

- Don't lie awake in bed
 - If you can't fall asleep, get out of bed. Make yourself a cup of warm milk or herbal tea. Do something relaxing, like meditating
- Try not to take naps during the day
- Do not use your bed during the day for other activities, like watching TV
- Try to exercise regularly
- Avoid doing anything that may keep you up in the 2 to 3 hours before you go to bed, like doing exercise
- Don't drink anything with caffeine in the afternoons and evenings
- Try to keep the same bedtime and wake-up times



Travel tips

Most people with COPD can still travel and take trips. The key is to plan ahead. Be sure to discuss your travel plans with your healthcare professional. Take time to prepare for what you may need. Then you can enjoy your trip and keep it stress-free.

Bring a health history from your healthcare professional. It should include:

- A list of your medicines
- Any allergies you have
- Any travel or activity limitations

Other tips include:

- Talking to your healthcare professional to find out if you need different medicines for your trip
- Bringing all of your medicines and medical equipment with you
- Making a list of healthcare professionals and hospitals that are near to where you will be staying
- If you take oxygen, talking to your healthcare professional and oxygen supplier about traveling
- Preparing for the climate and air quality where you are going
- Eating well, sleeping well, and not drinking alcohol in excess

Managing Your Moods

Do you have depression?

Sometimes, having COPD can make you feel frustrated or helpless. You may feel this way especially if you are not able to be as active as you once were.

We all feel sad or “blue” at times, but depression (de-preh-shun) is more than that. Different people have different symptoms. See your healthcare professional if you have any of these symptoms:

- Feel sad, nervous, or “empty” for at least 2 weeks
- Feel like things are hopeless
- Feel guilty, worthless, or helpless
- Lose interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities you used to enjoy, including sex
- Have less energy, feel tired or “slowed down”
- Have trouble concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
- Have problems sleeping or oversleeping
- Lose your appetite and lose weight, or you overeat and gain weight
- Have thoughts of death or suicide

If you have thoughts of death and suicide, call your doctor, 911, or a suicide hotline (1-800-273-TALK)

- Feel restless or irritable
- Have physical symptoms that do not respond to treatment, such as headaches, digestive problems, and long-lasting pain

Simple questions to ask yourself (the PHQ-2 test)

The PHQ-2 test is used as a “first step” to help screen for depression. It includes 2 screening questions.

Ask yourself the following 2 questions. Circle the answer that you feel is most true for you, using the rating scale below each of these questions (0 to 3). Add up your scores. If your total score is more than 3, you may have depression. Bring your answers to these questions with you when you see your healthcare professional.

Over the past 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?

1. Little interest or pleasure in doing things

Not at all = 0

Several days = 1

More than half the days = 2

Nearly every day = 3

2. Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless

Not at all = 0

Several days = 1

More than half the days = 2

Nearly every day = 3

For more information about the PHQ-2 test, go to www.phqscreeners.com.

What can you do if you have depression?

Depression can be treated. If you think you may be depressed, talk to your healthcare professional. Counseling, medicine, or both may help you feel better.



Managing Your Moods

How can you reduce worries, stress, and feeling nervous?

You may worry about shortness of breath, lifestyle changes, and loneliness. Stress and anxiety use up energy—and you need energy to breathe. That’s why you need to find ways to deal with worry, stress, and anxiety (which is feeling nervous or “on-edge”).

Things to try:

- Do things to reduce stress, such as yoga or breathing exercises
- Share your feelings and concerns about COPD. Talk to your family, friends, and healthcare professional. Get answers to your questions. You may want to join a support group for people with the disease
- Imagine that you are somewhere nice, like the beach

Keep your energy up!

When you have COPD, you need to take steps to save your energy. You may feel better and get more done if you:

- Pace yourself and don't rush
- Do things slowly and sit down as much as you can
- Find easy ways to dress, cook, and do chores. Use a cart with wheels to move things. Use a pole with long handles to reach for things
- Keep things you need within easy reach, so you don't have to bend or lift
- Rest after meals



Additional Help

Getting started

You can do a lot to live better with COPD. Ask your healthcare professional for ideas, too.

You may need to change some of your habits. This may feel strange at first, but hang in there. What you do day by day can make a big difference in how you feel. You *can* help control your symptoms and enjoy life! Take that first step right now.



Where can I find more information and support?

There are a lot of ways to get information and support.
Contact these helpful resources:

COPD Foundation

www.copdfoundation.org

Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD)

www.goldcopd.com

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI)

1-301-592-8573

www.nhlbi.nih.gov

The National Emphysema Foundation

www.emphysemafoundation.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

1-800-232-4636

www.cdc.gov

Pulmonary Education and Research Foundation

www.perf2ndwind.org

Ask your healthcare professional

Here are some questions you may want to discuss with your healthcare professional. Add any other questions you have. Bring this page with you on your next visit. Write down the answers you get in the lines below each question.

What kinds of foods should I eat or not eat?

How much liquid should I drink each day?
What kinds?

What weight is healthy for me?

Should I see a dietitian to get a food plan?

What kind of activity should I do?
How much?

Do I need a special exercise program?

Should I do breathing exercises?
How often?

How often should I have a lung function test?

What else can I do to help reduce my symptoms?

What medications are right for me?

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