

COPD and Exercise

Along with medication, exercise and physical activity play a big role in the management of your COPD.

Regular exercises will help you to:

- Better control your shortness of breath
- Increase your strength
- Increase your confidence in your abilities
- Improve your quality of life

Breathing Exercises

When using these techniques, remember to breathe out twice as long as you breathe in. A good way to do this is count 1, 2 as you breathe in and count 1, 2, 3 and 4 as you breathe out.

Diaphragmatic Breathing

Most people with COPD breathe with their upper chest muscles. It is important to relearn how to breathe with your diaphragm so that you can empty your lungs of stale air and take deeper breaths ensuring the best possible oxygen exchange.

Follow these steps:

1. Relax your neck and shoulders.
2. Put your hand on your stomach.
3. As you breathe in, feel your hand move out.
4. As you breathe out, feel your hand move in.
5. Repeat this pattern.



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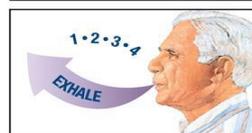
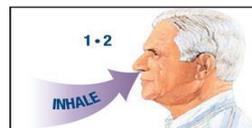
Note: Try not to move your upper chest too much. Breathe slowly; breathing too fast can make you dizzy.

Pursed Lip Breathing

Pursed Lip Breathing is a technique used to breathe out as much stale air as possible. You should use this technique whenever you perform activities that make you short of breath. Make sure you breathe out on the effort.

Follow these steps:

1. Breathe in slowly and deeply through your nose.
2. Purse your lips as if you were going to whistle or blow out candles.
3. Breathe out through pursed lips.
4. Repeat this pattern.



Walking

This low impact activity can improve the body's ability to use oxygen, build endurance, and strengthen muscles. If you are new to exercise start slowly, just 10 minutes of walking each day is enough. Take as many breaks as you need. Slowly increase your duration over time. The great advantage of walking is all you really need is a good pair of shoes to get started.