

Build Activity Into Your Everyday Life



Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) can affect your physical activity beliefs and behaviours. Most people with COPD are undecided about, rather than resistant to, increasing their physical activity levels. Not everyone thinks they ought to, or want to, change how active they are.

COPD

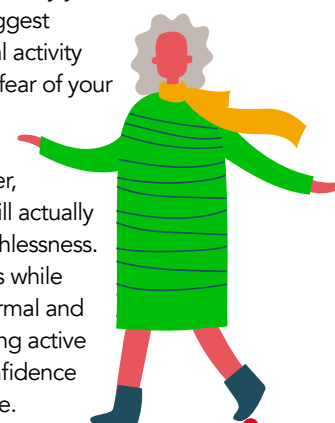
Increasing your physical activity won't cure your lung disease or completely relieve your respiratory symptoms; however, the benefits for people with COPD include:

- ① Reduced feeling of breathlessness
- ② Being able to walk further
- ③ Reduced number of exacerbations
- ④ Increased independence
- ⑤ Increased stamina and endurance
- ⑥ Increased confidence and self esteem
- ⑦ Improved mood
- ⑧ Improved quality of life
- ⑨ Decreased time in hospital/bad days
- ⑩ Living well for longer
- ⑪ Feeling more energetic and less fatigued
- ⑫ Increased strength
- ⑬ Improved balance, reduced risk of falls
- ⑭ Decreased co-morbidities
- ⑮ Less anxiety and depression.

You may already know you have to do as much as you can, otherwise the next day your breathing will be worse. The important thing is to pace yourself and be able to understand and identify your limits.

One of the biggest barriers to physical activity with COPD is the fear of your breathlessness getting worse.

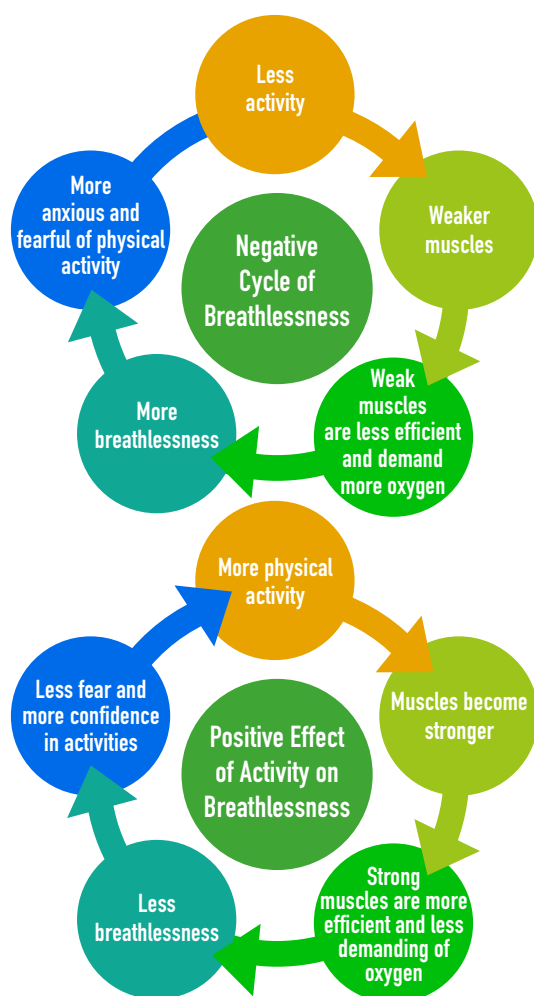
Over time however, physical activity will actually reduce your breathlessness. Getting breathless while being active is normal and good for you. Being active will build your confidence and independence.



Being unfit due to being inactive can start a vicious cycle, not just psychologically but within your musculoskeletal system too. Inactivity results in muscle wasting and joints becoming stiff. The combination of weakness makes activity feel even harder, so your perception of activity is negative. If you are fearful of activity it will affect your confidence and enthusiasm to exercise.

These tips can help keep you active:

- ① Make activity part of your morning routine.
- ② Ask your doctor or physical therapist if you are suitable to join a pulmonary rehabilitation group.
- ③ You only need to walk at least 600–1,100 steps a day further to improve your physical activity levels. About 10 minutes extra walking a day.
- ④ Be aware of your breathing while exercising – if you are able to only speak single words you are working too hard. Light to moderate intensity exercise should allow you to speak sentences without being completely breathless.
- ⑤ Maximise your good days. On your bad days still try and do something. Don't be demotivated.
- ⑥ Pace yourself.
- ⑦ Start slow.
- ⑧ Allow yourself more time if possible.
- ⑨ Stop smoking.
- ⑩ Don't expect huge changes overnight. If you keep a diary of what you are doing, what you can and can't do soon, you will see small changes. They may seem unnoticeable initially but the small things accumulate and give benefit over time.
- ⑪ Focus on long-term gains.
- ⑫ Plan to do more on days where you may have help, family or an employee doing the housework.



Making everyday life more active

Apart from formal exercise or group activities, you can build activity into your everyday life. Small changes will ultimately make big differences to your quality of life.

Ideas for making everyday life more active include:

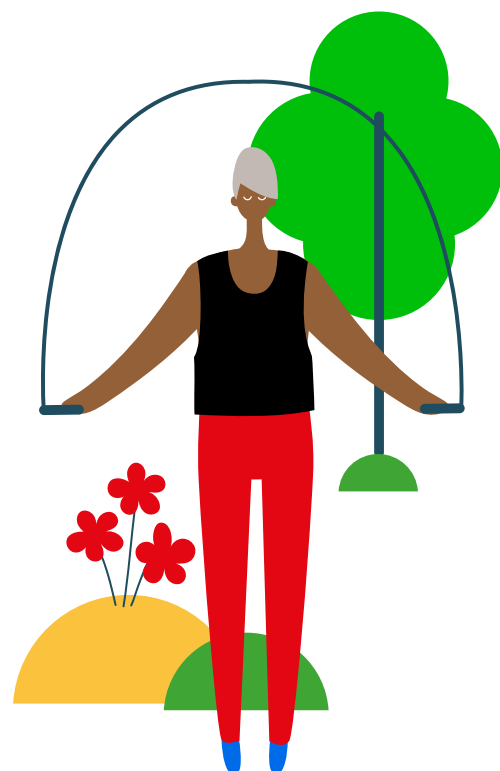
- Swimming or aqua
- Playing with grandchildren
- Singing
- Walking club
- Exercise class
- Pilates, yoga, Thai Chi



- Take active breaks
- Walking meetings
- Stand when on the telephone
- Stand at your desk
- Take stairs instead of lift

- Home-based exercises
- Stand during advert break
- Walking
- Singing
- Gardening
- Housework
- Walking the dog

- Cycling
- Walk
- Park further away in the car park
- On public transport get off a stop earlier and walk



The Last Word

A good idea before starting an activity is to sit down with your therapist or even a family member or friend and write down what it is you want to achieve. Set goals, easy achievable ones initially. These will help build self-esteem and confidence. Then you can start looking from short-term easier goals (which may be as simple as walking 10 minutes every day, or achieving a walk around the block 3 times a week) to middle- and long-term ones, extending

over the coming months and year.

'Action planning' is the next step. Write down what you are going to do each day or as a weekly plan. Keeping these plans, together with a daily diary, will help you stay motivated and see the improvements over time. You can use self-monitoring devices like pedometers, wrist-worn accelerometers or smartphones to keep track of your daily step count. There are also many activity apps that can be downloaded to mobile phones to help

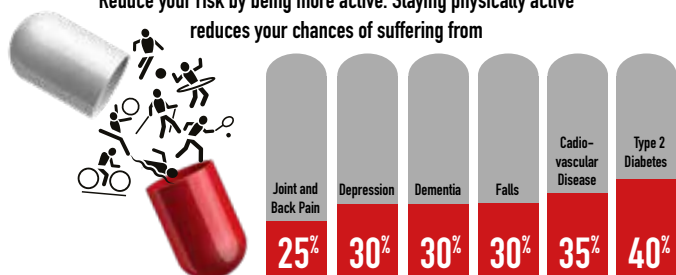
you monitor your activity levels, motivate you or provide you with daily exercise routines. Get help and advice from your physical therapist about what would best suit you and your condition.

Make sure you have support – be it family and friends or a physical therapist, support group or exercise programme. The right support will be invaluable in keeping you motivated and encouraged, particularly on those bad days, and make you accountable for changing your life!

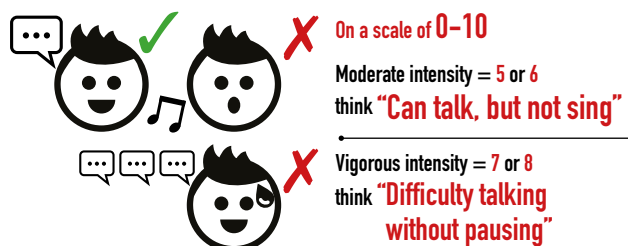
Gold Standard Exercise Recommendations for Health

If Exercise Was A Pill

Reduce your risk by being more active. Staying physically active reduces your chances of suffering from



What is Moderate Intensity Versus Vigorous Intensity Activity?



What Activity Should I Be Doing If I'm Between the Ages of 5 – 17?

- 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous-intensity physical activity – every day
- > 60 minutes daily will give even better health benefits
- Most of the daily physical activity should be aerobic
- But should incorporate vigorous – intensity activities that strengthen muscle and bone, at least 3 times per week



How Activity Intensity Reduces Your Risk of Dying



Reference: Domains of physical activity and all-cause mortality: systematic review and dose-response meta-analysis of cohort studies. <http://bit.ly/2S7BXOW>

What Activity Should I Be Doing If I'm Between 18 – 64?

- 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity each week, or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity
- Aerobic activity should be performed in bouts of at least 10 minutes
- 300 minutes of moderate-intensity or 150 of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity brings even greater health benefits
- Muscle-strengthening activities should be done involving major muscle groups on 2 or more days a week.



What Activity Should I Be Doing If I'm Over 65 Years of Age?

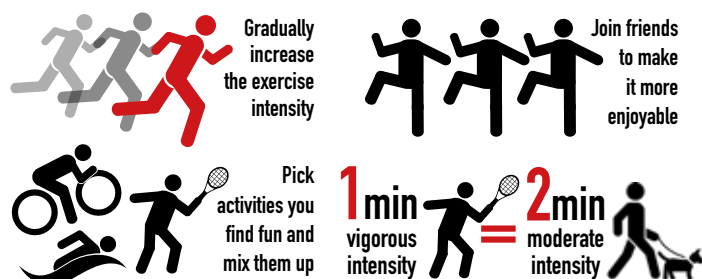
- 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity each week, or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity
- Aerobic activity should be performed in bouts of at least 10 minutes
- 300 minutes of moderate-intensity or 150 of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity brings even greater health benefits
- Activities that enhance balance and prevent falls on 3 or more days per week
- Muscle-strengthening activities should be done involving major muscle groups, on 2 or more days a week
- The goal is to be as physically active as your abilities and conditions allow.



First Steps to Being More Active



TIP If you are starting out try breaking your daily goal into shorter bouts of 10 minutes at a time



Reference: Global Recommendations on Physical Activity for Health, World Health Organisation 2018

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