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Fresh Air News

A Special Newsletter for
MVP Health Care® Members



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How do I exercise for COPD?

Exercises for COPD are simple to do and take little time. They generally consist of aerobic exercises, which increase oxygen flow to your muscles, and upper and lower body exercises, which strengthen muscles.

Always consult with your doctor before starting any exercise program. People with COPD may have heart problems, such as coronary artery disease (CAD) or high blood pressure, that limit exercise options. You may need medical supervision when you start your program.

If you become breathless while doing any of the exercises, rest in a position with your shoulders supported (such as in a chair) and wait until you can breathe easily again.

Getting started

- Talk to your doctor. He or she may ask that you do specific exercises and will help you figure out not only how often and how long to do your exercises but also how to set your long-term exercise program goals. Although it may take weeks before you are able to reach your goals, how long it takes is not as important as doing the exercises consistently.
- Start slowly and gradually. For each exercise, either time how long you can do it or count the number of times you can do it before you are mildly out of breath. Then rest and move on to the next exercise. Each week, increase the time you spend doing each exercise or how many times you do each one.
- Pick activities that you enjoy.
- Always have a warm-up and cool-down. This is a good time for stretches.
- Pay attention to your breathing. Try to breathe slowly to save your breath. Breathe in through your nose, keeping your mouth closed. This warms and moisturizes the air you breathe. Breathe out through pursed lips.

Lower body exercises

Knee extensions, leg lifts, and step-ups develop lower body muscles and will help you move around more easily for longer periods of time.

Talk to your doctor before starting these exercises. He or she will help you know how often and how long to exercise and how to set your long-term exercise goals.

- **Knee extensions.** Sit in a chair with your feet slightly apart. Breathe out as you straighten your knee and raise your lower leg. Breathe in as you bend your knee and return your foot to the floor.
- **Leg lifts.** Sit in a chair with your feet slightly apart. Breathe out as you lift one leg straight up so that the knee rises toward your shoulder. Breathe in as you return your foot to the floor.
- **Step-ups.** Start on a flight of stairs with a banister to hold. Breathe out as you take one step up. Breathe in as you step back down.



Upper body exercises

Upper body exercises increase strength in arm and shoulder muscles, which provide support to the rib cage and can help improve breathing. They help in everyday tasks such as carrying groceries and doing housework.

Talk to your doctor before starting these exercises. He or she will help you know how often and how long to exercise and how to set your long-term exercise goals.

- **Arm extensions.** Start with your arms by your side. Breathe out as you raise one arm to shoulder height, keeping the arm straight and pointing to the side. Breathe in as you return the arm to your side.
- **Elbow circles.** Sit or stand with your feet slightly apart. Place your hands on your shoulders with your elbows at shoulder level and pointing out. Slowly make a circle with your elbows. Breathe out as you start the circle and breathe in as you complete the circle.
- **Elbow breathing.** Sit with your feet slightly apart. Lift your elbows to shoulder level and touch your fingertips in front of your chest. Breathe in as you pull your elbows back so that your fingertips separate. Breathe out as you return your elbows and fingertips to the original position.

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Quick Tips for Being Prepared to Talk to Your Doctor

Patients who have good relationships with their doctors are more satisfied with their care and have better results. Here are some tips to help you and your doctor become better partners in improving your health care:

- Write down your questions before your visit. List the most important ones first to make sure they get asked and answered.
- Bring a “health history” list with you, and keep it up to date.
- Always bring any medications you are taking, including over-the-counter, or a list of those medications (include when and how often you take them) and what strength.
- You might want to bring someone along to help you ask questions and remember the answers.
- Find more information and printable forms at **mvphealthcare.com**.

Source: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)

MVP Health Care offers a health management program for members living with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). For more information or to see if you qualify, call **1-866-942-7966**. MVP’s program is based on the Global Strategy for the Diagnosis, Management, and Prevention of COPD, Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD). This program must be coordinated with your physician.

Information in this newsletter does not constitute medical advice. If you have questions about your health, talk to your doctor.

Health benefit plans are issued or administered by MVP Health Plan, Inc.; MVP Health Insurance Company; MVP Select Care, Inc.; and MVP Health Services Corp., operating subsidiaries of MVP Health Care, Inc. Not all plans available in all states and counties.



Contact Us

For more information, call

1-866-942-7966

Monday–Friday, 8:30 am–5:00 pm

TTY: **1-800-662-1220**

We value your opinion.

Please fill out a brief, anonymous survey at **mvplistsens.com**. We will use this information to create a better experience for all of our members. All responses are 100% confidential. The survey only takes a few minutes to complete.

Reduce Your Risk of the Flu and Pneumonia

It is important to get vaccinated against the flu and pneumonia. Many pneumonia-related deaths are preventable through vaccination and appropriate treatment. Pneumonia is a lung infection that can cause mild to severe illness in people of all ages. Signs of it include: coughing, fever, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, rapid breathing or shortness of breath, chills, or chest pain.

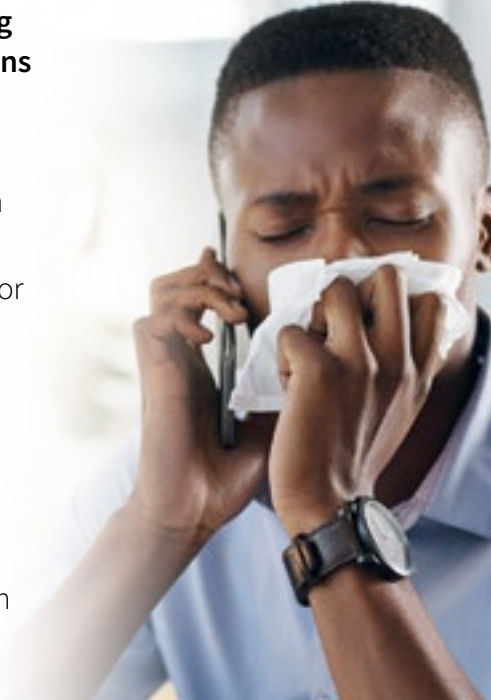
Certain people are more likely to become ill with pneumonia:

- Adults 65 years of age or older
- Children younger than five years of age
- People under the age of 65 who have underlying medical conditions (like diabetes or HIV/AIDS)
- People ages 19–64 who smoke cigarettes or have asthma

There are several strategies for preventing pneumonia and other respiratory infections such as colds and the flu:

- Wash your hands regularly.
- Clean hard surfaces that are touched often (like doorknobs and countertops).
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue, your elbow, or sleeve.
- Limit your exposure to cigarette smoke.
- Take steps to treat, control and prevent conditions like diabetes and HIV/AIDS.

Get vaccinated. In the United States, several vaccines prevent infections that can cause pneumonia, including Pneumococcal, Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib), Pertussis (whooping cough) and seasonal influenza (flu) vaccines. Talk to your health care provider for more information on these vaccines.



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