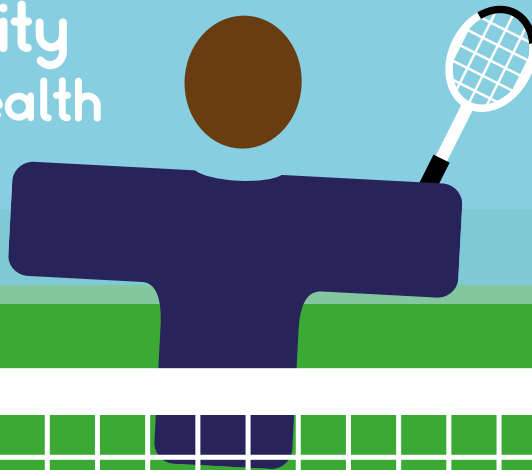




Physical activity for your lung health



This resource talks about how physical activity may affect your lung health. It should be used along with additional information given to you from your family doctor.

Regular physical activity can help you manage many lung conditions such as asthma, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease or COPD, and more. Studies show that people with a lung condition who are more physically active have:



Improved physical activity tolerance

Better mood, sleep, and quality of life

Improved physical functioning

Less muscle wasting in people with COPD

Fewer hospital admissions for people with COPD

Your physical activity can
be **enjoyable**, **effective**,
and **safe**.



Enjoyable



Some people with lung conditions find it hard to get started with physical activity because they feel short of breath. It is best to start small and build up slowly. Being active with others can be a great way to make physical activity more enjoyable.

Try different activities and find what works best for you in the long run. If you're not sure how to begin, consider attending an exercise class or an organized group. Contact the Canadian Lung Association, an organization working to promote lung health and prevent and manage lung disease, to find out about different lung health programs.

Effective



Aerobic exercise can help with mood and quality of life in people with lung conditions. Strength, balance, and flexibility exercises are very effective for any type of lung condition. Pulmonary rehabilitation is a very effective strategy for people living with COPD. Your health care team can refer you.

Safe



The kind of physical activity you can do safely may be affected by your health conditions, your fitness level, and by your current treatments. Getting started usually means moving 'little but often' with some light walking or similar types of activity. Gradually increase to a level that makes you feel like you are breathing heavier than normal, so that you can talk but not sing.

If you feel especially tired, you can try less intense physical activity for a shorter time, or take a day off and try again the next day. **If physical activity makes breathing much harder, please discuss this with your health care team.**

An inhaler and a slower warm-up and cool down period may be helpful.

Avoid physical activity and consult your doctor if you experience:

- Asthma and it is poorly controlled
- COPD and it is not stable or your oxygen saturation levels are below 88-90%

OR

if you have any of the following symptoms:

- Unusual fatigue or weakness
- Chest pain or an irregular pulse
- Difficulty breathing
- Feeling sick during activity
- Acute pain or injury
- Unexplained dizzy spells

Helpful resources



The Canadian Lung Association website has great information about specific lung conditions and physical activity.

<https://www.lung.ca/lung-health/lung-disease/asthma/exercise-and-asthma>

<https://www.lung.ca/lung-health/lung-disease/copd/treatment>

Doctors in the UK have put together a website with informative videos and online pamphlets, including specific advice about physical activity for different respiratory conditions.

<http://www.benefitfromactivity.org.uk/why-am-i-doing-this/conditions/respiratory-disease/?submit=Go>

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