

Better Breathing

A publication of
Breathe California
of the Bay Area

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Better Breathing
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Exercising Safely with COPD

Courtesy of the American Association for Respiratory Care

People who suffer from COPD can be debilitated as a result of poor mucus clearance, increased secretions, and frequent infections. This can lead to anxiety, depression, and social isolation due to the limitations placed on their lifestyles.

Exercise, at almost any level, improves the oxygen utilization, work capacity, and state of mind of COPD patients. Low-impact activities place minimum stress on joints and are easier to perform than high-intensity activities. Some COPD patients may also benefit from exercise programs that target the upper body and are designed to increase strength of the respiratory muscles.

If you are a COPD patient, you already know you expend extra energy just to breathe. If you can use your energy more efficiently for breathing, you will have more energy left for performing routine activities or participating in new activities. Actively practicing some form of exercise, along with proper nutrition, can significantly improve your quality

of life. In this article, you will find 10 general tips for exercising. Of course, before delving into any exercise program, be sure to consult your physician.

1. Warm up before exercising

Warm-up exercises include plenty of stretching. If you have chosen walking as your aerobic exercise, you can warm up by starting out at a slow pace for five or ten minutes.

2. Set attainable goals

Begin your exercise regimen by setting a goal you know you can achieve. Then, gradually set your goals higher as you progress. It's good to work up to sustaining your activity for 20 to 30 minutes, two to four times a week. If you can comfortably do five minutes of exercise your first week, and then increase it to ten minutes the next, you will probably be able to attain this 20-minute goal. As you achieve

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ARE YOU SUFFERING FROM CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE?

You may be eligible to take part in a research study if:

- You are at least 40 years old
- You have a diagnosis of COPD
- You are a current or ex-smoker
- You do not use oxygen for more than 16 hours per day
- You do not have asthma

Please contact Marie Thompson at: 408.553.0709

Allergy and Asthma Associates of Santa Clara Valley Research Center

Exercising Safely...

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each goal, however small, you are more likely to continue your exercise program.

3. Vary your activities

Alternate your exercise activities such as swimming, walking, upper-body weight training, and low-impact aerobics. If you get bored, you are less likely to stick with it.

4. Choose activities you enjoy

Exercise shouldn't be something you dread – have some fun with it! You may need to try a number of activities before you find the one(s) best suited to your lifestyle.

5. Exercise with a friend

Not only will you motivate each other, you should always be able to carry on a comfortable conversation while exercising. And what better way to make sure you don't overdo it?

6. Don't make excuses – Just do it

If your physician approves your chosen low-impact activity, don't make excuses why you can't begin – just do

it! You can perform plenty of activities while wearing a supplemental oxygen setup. Any exercise is better than no exercise at all. Start slowly, and as you begin to reap the benefits of exercise, you will soon find you want to do more.

7. Take time to cool down

Cool-down activities, such as stretching or walking/swimming at a slower pace, will round out your exercise period and bring your heart rate back to normal.

8. Stop if you experience a problem

If you become nauseous or dizzy, feel weak, have palpitations, become short of breath, or experience pain, stop exercising immediately. You may want to consult your doctor, depending on the degree of pain or discomfort.

9. Set your own pace

Proceed at a pace that is comfortable for you. You're not in competition with anyone but yourself.

10. Reward yourself

As you reach each of your goals, however small, reward yourself in some way. You deserve it!

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In the News

Each month we are proud to bring you some of the latest news affecting lung disease patients. You can also find more news briefs and articles online by visiting:

www.lungsrus.org

Click on the News link from the menu bar to reach our newsroom. From there, you can view individual articles by clicking on "News Briefs."

From the Newsroom, you can also read about the agency's latest work in the community by clicking on the "Agency News" link.

Breathe California Endorses Measure A

County Initiative Will Help Fund Health and Transportation Priorities

On March 21, Breathe California announced its endorsement of Measure A, an initiative on the June 6 ballot in Santa Clara County. If passed, Measure A would raise the sales tax in the county to 8.75% to generate critically-needed funds for high-priority local needs including, healthcare, transportation, and trauma/emergency services.

"Measure A will help us accomplish our mission to fight lung disease," said Margo Sidener, MS, CHES, Executive Director of Breathe California.

"Increased funding for health and human services will ensure that those who need help will have access to health care. In addition, improved transportation will reduce air pollution, a serious cause of lung disease in our local area."

Measure A will provide for a number of local needs which will help improve the quality of life enjoyed in Santa Clara County, including:

Better Health Care

The cost of health care is out of control. Without new local funds, the county will need to reduce a number of

critical health and human services. Measure A will help: keep Santa Clara Valley Medical Center open (serving 200,000 patients annually); provide health insurance to more than 1,000 currently waitlisted kids; and maintain county emergency and trauma services.

Transportation Improvements

In the coming years, transportation will become an even greater issue as population and traffic in the Bay Area grow. Measure A will help: ensure that the BART extension to Santa Clara County is built expeditiously; improve our roads and expressways; repave pedestrian and bicycle pathways; expand Caltrain, bus and light rail service; and increase transit services for seniors and disabled residents.

Local Control and Accountability

By law, funds raised through Measure A cannot be taken away by the state or federal government. Measure A also ensures fiscal accountability by requiring Annual Independent Audits. In addition, an Independent Citizens Oversight Committee will monitor spending to ensure every dollar is spent efficiently and without waste.

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**Breathe California
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*Fighting Lung Disease
in All Its Forms and
Working with Our
Communities to
Protect Lung Health*

April Better Breathers Club Meetings

Monday, April 10th, 1:30 to 3:00 – Palo Alto
Avenidas Senior Center, 450 Bryant St.

Speaker: Colin Leeland, Advantacare
Topic: The Right Type of Oxygen Equipment for YOU!

Monday, April 24th, 1:30 to 3:00 – San Jose
Breathe California, 1469 Park Ave.

Speaker: Colin Leeland, Advantacare
Topic: The Right Type of Oxygen Equipment for YOU!

SAVE THE DATE: May Meetings

Monday, May 8th, 1:30 pm – Avenidas Senior Center, Palo Alto

Monday, May 29th, 1:30 pm – Breathe California, San Jose

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