



Presentation for Better Breathers on COPD

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July 21, 2010.

What exactly IS COPD

- Refers to chronic bronchitis and emphysema which are diseases of the lungs in which the airways become narrowed
- Leads to a limitation of the flow of air to and from the lungs causing shortness of breath.



Causes of COPD

- Tobacco smoking, noxious gases, air pollution, genetics
- 6th leading cause of death worldwide
- The irritant causes an abnormal inflammatory response (chronic bronchitis) and destroys lung tissue (emphysema)



Self Management Skills for the COPD Patient

Live in a smoke free environment

- Quit smoking and remain a non-smoker
- Avoid second-hand smoke



Comply with your Meds

- Take your meds as prescribed on a regular basis
- Use the proper inhalation and maintenance techniques for your devices



Manage your breathing

- Pursed-lip and diaphragmatic breathing
- Active Breathing Cycle
- Body positions (ie: lean forward) to reduce shortness of breath
- Postural drainage techniques to secrete sputum
- Proper coughing technique



Conserve your energy – the 4 Ps

- Prioritize your activities
- Plan your schedule
- Pace yourself
- Positioning

Recognizing Signs of Worsening COPD

Signs: changes in color of sputum, new episodes of shortness of breath at night, fever, chest pain, heart palpitations, confusion, slurring of speech

- If you have any of these signs, call the doctor (early treatment is more effective)
- Get your flu shots and have regular checkups

Maintain an active life

- Use the pursed-lip breathing technique when doing activities or making efforts
- Exercise regularly (exercise program at least 3 x/week, 30 min each time)
- Maintain physical activities (activities of daily living, walking, climbing stairs etc)



Keep a healthy diet

- Maintain a healthy weight
- Eat smaller meals more often (5-6 meals/day)
- Eat food high in protein and follow recommendations of the Canada Food Guide



Have good sleep habits

- Maintain a routine
- Avoid heavy meals and stimulants before bedtime
- Relax before bedtime



Tips for Shortness of Breath

- Keep calm, relax your neck and shoulders
- Try not to gasp for air
- Breathe slowly through your nose and purse your lips as you breathe out
- Relaxed sitting (leaning forward)
- Leaning
- Walking (hills and up and down stairs)

Plan your trips

- Get a list from your doctor of current medical diagnoses, allergies and meds
- Have enough medication for the duration of the trip
- Bring your plan of action including a supply of antibiotics and prednisone
- Make sure you have adequate health insurance

Manage your stress and anxiety

- Use your relaxation and breathing techniques
- Try to solve one problem at a time
- Talk about your problems and do not hesitate to ask for help
- Maintain a positive attitude



Questions????

