

Hope & Healing

Bronchitis and Emphysema

A heart at peace gives life to the body — Proverbs 14:30

Introduction _____

The bronchial tubes carry air into the lungs. When these tubes are inflamed or infected, less air is able to flow into and out of the lungs and heavy mucus is coughed up. This is bronchitis.

The air we breathe flows down the bronchial tubes into the air sacs at the end of the tubes. The lining of these air sacs is very thin and oxygen flows through the lining into the nearby blood vessels for transport to the body's tissues. The walls of these air sacs break down in emphysema, causing shortness of breath and cough. That's the damage emphysema causes.

Chronic bronchitis and emphysema are combined under one medical term C.O.P.D. (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease).

Causes of C.O.P.D. _____

The normal lung has a remarkable way of cleaning itself through small hairs that sweep out harmful particles we breathe. And the mucus produced in the lungs contains a protein that protects the air sacs against damage by smoke that gets past the hairs.

With C.O.P.D. the floor of the lung sacs can't come clean. There's too much mucus and it's too thick to cough out. About 85% of all persons with C.O.P.D. have it because they smoked cigarettes long enough for the smoke to damage the hairs and to overcome the protection of the special protein. In fact, a small percentage of those with C.O.P.D. were born without the protective protein and if they smoke they're sure to get C.O.P.D. People who work in irritating dusts and fumes and

those who live in heavy air pollution are also at risk of developing C.O.P.D.

Preventing C.O.P.D. _____

If 85% of C.O.P.D. is caused by cigarette smoking, then 85% of the problem could be prevented by quitting smoking. Other measures include:

- **Reduce your exposure to air pollution.** Listen to reports about air pollution on the radio and T.V. When the ozone (smog) level is unhealthy, stay indoors or restrict your outdoor activities to early morning. Avoid activities where others smoke; that's also pollution.
- **Maintain good overall health habits.** This includes proper nutrition, adequate sleep, and regular exercise.
- **Get a flu shot in November each year.**
- **Get a pneumonia shot**
- **Drink plenty of water.** This keeps the mucus flowing more readily.

Improving C.O.P.D. _____

With C.O.P.D. your respiratory and immune systems work overtime, making you extra vulnerable to other respiratory diseases. But there is much that you can do to protect yourself with proper nutrition.

You see, the healthier the body's defender cells are, the better they do their work. And, they become healthier by feeding them adequate vitamins, minerals, protein, and carbohydrates.

Get Enough Calories _____

More than 30 percent of patients with severe C.O.P.D. are malnourished. It is recommended that all patients with C.O.P.D. eat at least 3 meals daily of high quality foods - proteins rich meats and vitamin rich fruits and vegetables.

Get Plenty of Exercise _____

Studies show that patients with C.O.P.D. who get regular aerobic exercise at least 30 minutes 5 days a week have improved lung function. This can be accomplished by walking, using a treadmill, or riding an exercise bike.

Get Enough Vitamins _____

Vitamins tend to help your immune system fight off infections and helps you body repair damage. The most effective way to get an adequate amount of vitamins and minerals is to eat 5 serving of fruits or vegetables daily. The health benefits of this goes far beyond improving C.O.P.D. If you are not sure you can get enough fruits and vegetables then taking a multivitamin is a good idea.

Clean Air at Home _____

Your home can be a healthier place if you rid it of breathing irritants. Start by cleaning your home heating unit. If you have a hot air system consider cleaning the duct system or placing filters over the air vents in each room.

When you clean use a mop or a vacuum system that will trap the air

particles instead of throwing them into the air as a broom may do.

Consider a humidifier for your bedroom to keep your air passages moist as you sleep. Also investigate the benefits of using a H.E.P.A. type air filter for your home.

Your cleaning materials may contain unnecessary chemicals that irritate your air passages. You can wash floor with borax rather than use ammonia based cleaners. And for windows why not try white vinegar mixed with warm water sprayed on with a plant mister. Furniture can be polished with olive oil or beeswax or a combination. And the air in your home can be freshened with a box of baking soda.

Exercises for Better Breathing ____

The place to start gaining the advantages of exercise is to learn to breathe more efficiently. The following techniques can make you an expert:

- Learn to breathe deeply from your diaphragm. Take deep breaths several times a day.
- Breathe through puckered lips to build muscle strength. Blow out the thinnest, longest stream of air you can.
- Breathe against resistance. Lie on your back. Place a book on your abdomen. Breathe for 5 minutes. Gradually increase the time until you work up to 15 minutes twice daily. As well, put on a heavier book as you get used to it.
- Along with breathing more efficiently, begin to exercise. If your pleasure is golf, try that. If you prefer to work out at home, put on your favorite music and hike your living room steps, breathing from your diaphragm through puckered lips. Do 5 minutes the first day. Keep going until it has become a habit and you are able to go for half

an hour. Then, try it outside as weather permits, three to six days a week. You'll be surprised at the results.

Summary _____

Some people with C.O.P.D. fight the disease. Others give in. Attitude makes all the difference. Attitude and learning to breathe more efficiently and getting on a regular exercise program and eating nutritious foods. Do what you can and your body will deliver the oxygen your tissues need.

Awaken the Miracles Within You

The Miracle of Faith in Action

Faith in action is taking God as your partner. If you do this, you will find yourself striding out boldly, instead of taking timid steps. With God beside you, you don't have to be content with poor health, boring work, or restricted circumstances. Rise above them. Others have, so can you.

When God is your partner, it will cost no money. But, it will cost you something, your whole life. But it will be worth it. One thing: God will have to be the senior partner and will want to be included in every corner of your life. If you are ready, He is too.

Most people would be thrilled to go into partnership with the head of IBM. But here is a partnership of faith and your partner has unlimited power, unsurpassable wisdom, and unlimited wealth. Think about it.

The recommendations and information in this handout are appropriate in most cases. However, for specific information concerning your personal medical condition, please, consult your doctor.