

Fresh Air News

A Special Newsletter
for MVP Members

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Using Exercise to Feel Better

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) often makes it difficult to breathe, which in turn may limit how active you are and how much you exercise. But it is important to remain active and exercise when you have COPD.

Activity and exercise can:

- Build muscle strength and endurance. This will help you be more active—you will be able to do more activities for longer amounts of time.
- Reduce shortness of breath.

Exercises for COPD can be done nearly anywhere. They are often done as part of a pulmonary rehabilitation program.

Always consult with your doctor before starting an exercise program. Heart problems, such as coronary artery disease (CAD) or high blood pressure, are common in people who have COPD and may limit exercise options. You may need medical supervision when you start your program.

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

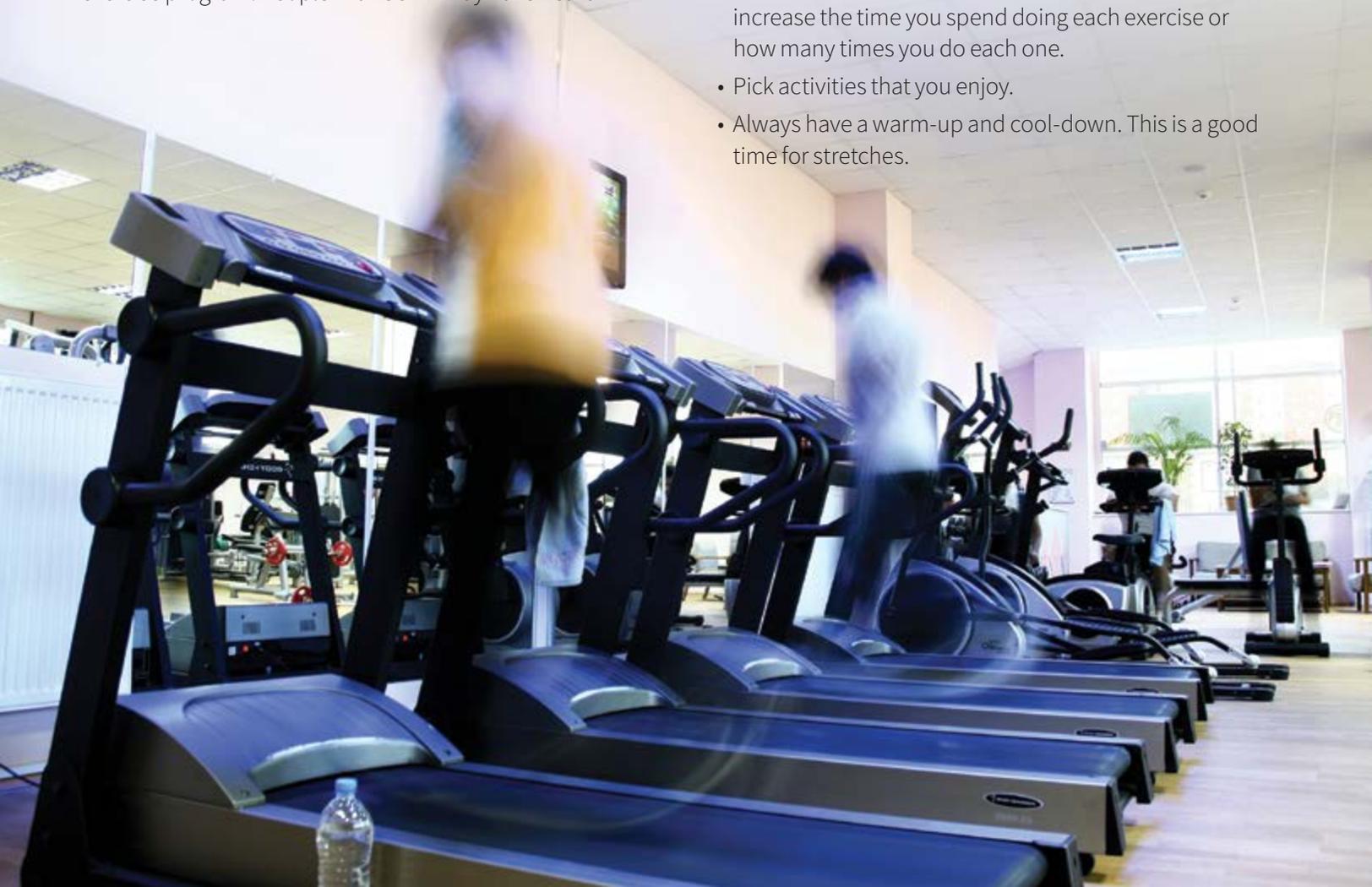
problems, such as coronary artery disease (CAD) or high blood pressure, that limit exercise options. You may need medical supervision when you start your program.

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

To get started with an exercise program:

- 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.

Aerobic Exercises

Aerobic exercises increase the amount of oxygen that is delivered to your muscles, which allows them to work longer. This helps you do more activities for longer periods of time.

Any exercise that raises your heart rate and keeps it up for an extended period of time will improve your aerobic fitness. These exercises include walking, using a treadmill, cycling or using a stationary bicycle, swimming, and water aerobics.

Daily activities can also be aerobic: walking to work or to run errands, sweeping (perhaps to fast-paced music), playing actively with children, and walking your dog.

There is an easy way to determine whether your heart rate is at the right level during aerobic exercises:

- If you can't talk and exercise at the same time, you are exercising too hard.
- If you can talk while you exercise, you are doing fine.
- If you can sing while you exercise, you may not be exercising hard enough.

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

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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MVP Health Care offers a condition 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).

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

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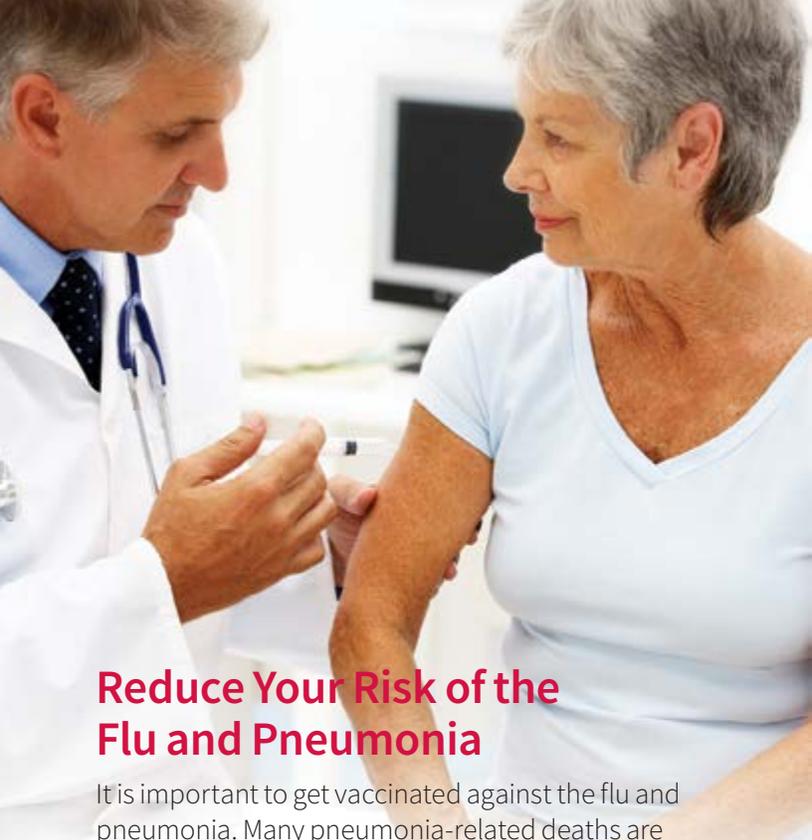
Contact Us

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 percent 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 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 or into 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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