

CHRONIC LUNG DISEASE DOESN'T HAVE TO TAKE YOUR BREATH AWAY

Chronic Lung Disease (CLD) is not a single disease. It's a tag used to describe a variety of illnesses, such as asthma, chronic bronchitis, and emphysema, all of which make it hard to breathe because air doesn't flow easily out of your lungs. While chronic lung disease cannot be cured, it can be managed, especially if you make key lifestyle changes.

- If you smoke, stop smoking, and try to reduce overall exposure to smoke.
- Add exercise to your daily routine.
- Take medicines to reduce or relieve some symptoms.

CHRONIC LUNG DISEASE

If you have CLD, the benefits of exercise will be even greater for you, but you should always ask your PCP what types of exercises will be best. A safe level of exercise will depend on your health and the stage of your disease.

Even small amounts of exercise are better than none.

- Aerobic activities like walking, water aerobics, dancing, and even gardening have proven beneficial for people with CLD. Start out slowly and watch for signs you are doing too much. Clue: You are pushing too hard if you cannot talk while you are exercising. The solution is to simply sit down and rest for a while.
- Gradually increase your exercise level over time.

In addition to aerobic exercises, you might also consider strength training, especially exercises that focus on strengthening your abdominal muscles, which can help with breathing.

- People with CLD have also benefited from learning relaxation and breathing techniques, and other measures to help control panic attacks, which can sometimes occur when people with CLD get anxious.



SAFETY TIPS

For people with CLD, some basic safety rules apply if you decide to start exercising.

- Do not exercise outdoors when it is very cold, very hot, or very humid.
- Avoid exercises that require or encourage holding your breath, such as pushups and sit ups.
- Do not take hot/cold showers or sauna baths after you exercise.
- Do not exercise during times when your disease is not under control, unless your PCP tells you it is okay.

MEDICATIONS

People with CLD sometimes benefit from taking steroids and using bronchodilators. These medications can help open the airways and make breathing easier.

As always, seek advice from your doctor about how to breathe easier in your daily battle against CLD.