

Things You Can Do To Keep Well

For adults with COPD



Respiratory Care WA
Asthma | COPD | Respiratory Health



Don't smoke tobacco or vape

Quitting smoking is one of the most powerful things you can do to keep well. You don't have to do it alone. Call Quitline on 13 78 48.



Join a pulmonary rehabilitation program

"Pulmonary" means "related to the lungs". "Pulmonary rehabilitation" means a program to help you manage your COPD. It is often run by a physiotherapist. It includes exercise, education and support. It can help reduce your breathlessness and anxiety. It will help reduce flare-ups and hospital admissions.



Know your medications

Learn about your medications so you know what they do and when to take them. If you are unsure about your medications, ask your doctor or pharmacist to explain them to you.



Learn how to use your inhaler and spacer

Using an inhaler and spacer correctly ensures that the medicine gets to your lungs where it is needed. Contact Respiratory Care WA to book a free session on inhaler and spacer technique.



Keep your vaccinations up to date

Vaccinations help prevent infections that can cause flare-ups. You can get your vaccinations from your GP for free. Get the flu vaccination every year. Check you are up to date with Pneumococcal and COVID-19 vaccines.



Learn about COPD

Understanding and Learning about your COPD will help you manage your symptoms. Ask questions about your COPD from the health professionals supporting you. Make sure you understand the steps on your Home Action Plan. Ask your GP to clarify and repeat anything that you find confusing.

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Get the right COPD tests

Different tests are used to diagnose and treat COPD. One common test is “spirometry” which tests your lungs and shows how well they function. There are also different lung scans that can be done. Having these tests done helps make sure you have the right diagnosis. These tests also show how mild or how severe your COPD is. Ask your doctor to check if you have had all the tests needed to properly diagnose and treat your COPD.



Visit your healthcare team regularly

Your GP, nurse, physiotherapist and lung health educator are all part of your healthcare team. Scheduling regular appointments, visits and calls with your healthcare team will help maintain lung function and enhance your quality of life.



Visit your GP 1 week after being in hospital

Keep recovery from hospital visits on track by checking in with your GP a week after any hospital visits caused by COPD flare-ups.



Eat healthy food and exercise

Give your body all the help you can to stay well with COPD flare-ups.



Be aware of things that can irritate your lungs

There are many things besides smoking and vaping that are known to irritate and damage your lungs. Common examples are smoke from fires, vehicle exhaust, smog, dust, and chemical fumes. Think about how you might avoid lung irritants. Have a plan in place in case of a bushfire near you.



Look after your mental health

Many people with COPD have feelings of low mood, anxiousness and depression. If you feel like this then make an appointment with your GP as soon as possible. Do not wait to see if these feelings go away. Seek help and let your family and loved ones know what is happening. The key to managing these feelings is to talk early about them and get help and treatment.